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ABSTRACT

The populations of Mexican Americans and other Latinos in Berwyn and Cicero, Illinois--two of Chicago's oldest suburbs--have increased dramatically in the last decade. This needs assessment interviewed 172 people individually and in 19 focus groups. Findings indicate that education, children, and youth were the top priorities for Latinos and non-Latinos, followed by civic participation and political representation, health, immigration, crime, and violence. Respondents felt that more Latino and bilingual school personnel should be hired. Additional daycare was needed, and expanded youth programs would encourage high school completion and help prevent teen pregnancy. Latino youth needs included after-school recreational opportunities that are culturally relevant and welcoming. Expansion of youth programs could keep young Latinos from joining gangs. Better adult education, such as English-as-a-second-language and GED classes, could facilitate Latinos' integration into a new society. Many saw a need for increased leadership training and capacity building to bolster Latino community organizations. Respondents also supported advocacy and community organizing initiatives, efforts to monitor selected public policies, and diversity awareness programs to increase trust among community residents. Health care needs included services sensitive to the needs of the uninsured and available to immigrants; bilingual and bicultural medical personnel; and initiatives to address teenage pregnancy, domestic violence, and services for disabled children. Immigrants needed legal assistance to understand their rights and responsibilities as well as assistance in becoming U.S. citizens. (Contains many bar graphs and other figures) (TD)

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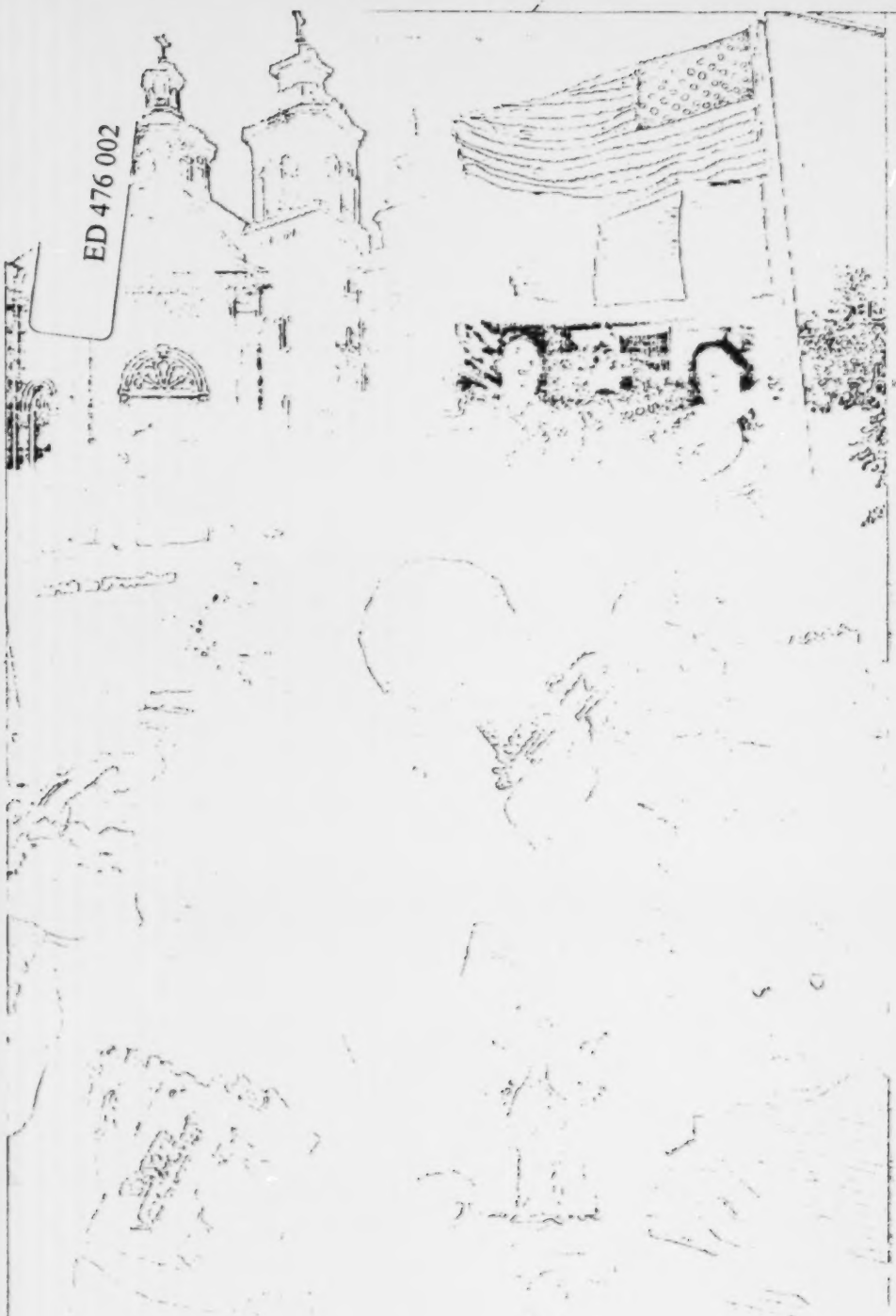

Bordering the Mainstream:

A Needs Assessment of Latinos in Berwyn and Cicero, Illinois January 2002

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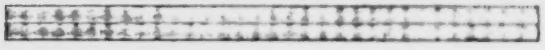
Bordering the Mainstream

A Needs Assessment of Latinos in Berwyn and Cicero, Illinois



January 2002

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Table of Contents

Introduction v
Acknowledgements vii
Who Are the Latinos of Berwyn and Cicero? 1
- Diverse National Origins 1
- Residential Patterns 2
- What Does 'Latino' Mean? 4
- Berwyn-Cicero Latinos Have Roots in Chicago and Abroad 5
- Mexico 6
- Mexican Population Growth in the Twentieth Century 7
- Mexican Immigrants and Their Reception 8
- Public Policies Particularly Relevant to Latinos 10
- Latino Population Growth in Berwyn and Cicero 13
- Latino Social and Economic Status 15
- Latino Families 25
- Latino Strengths 29

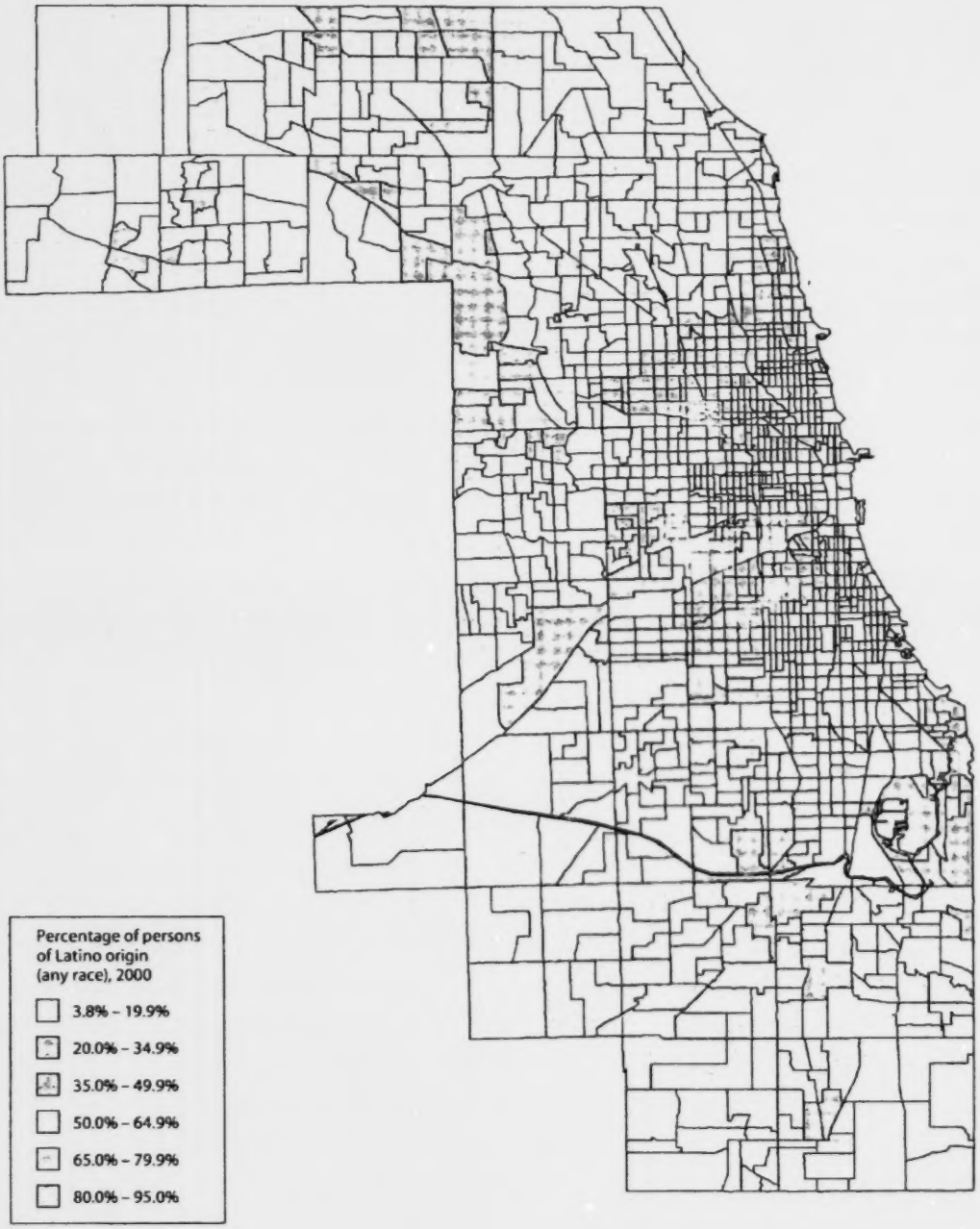
The Berwyn-Cicero Environment for Latinos 31
- History of Cicero 31
- Cicero Corruption History 34
- History of Berwyn 36
- Do Latinos Feel Accepted in Cicero? 37
- Do Latinos Feel Accepted in Berwyn? 38

Issue-by-Issue Analysis of Local Needs 39
- Children, Youth, and Education 42
- Political and Community Representation and Participation 51
- Law Enforcement, Crime and Violence 57
- Health 60
- Immigration 65
- Housing 67
- Social and Human Services 71
- Employment/Occupation 73
- Local Businesses 77
- Transportation 80
- Discussion of Community Priorities 82

Conclusion 85
- Overall Goal 85
- Three Key Objectives 85

Methodology 87
End Notes 95

Cook County
Percentage of Persons of Latino Origin, 2000



Introduction

The City of Berwyn and the Town of Cicero, Illinois, are suburbs located west of Chicago. Cicero borders the City of Chicago and has been called the 'First Suburb West' because it was the first suburb to grow up west of Chicago. Berwyn is located immediately west of Cicero and shares a three-mile border with its neighbor.

Both Berwyn and Cicero were established in the nineteenth century, but their populations boomed in the early decades of the twentieth century. Both have had distinctive ethnic communities, which until recent decades consisted primarily of first-, second-, and third-generation Eastern and Southern Europeans, particularly persons of Polish, Czech, Lithuanian, and Italian heritages.

In the twentieth century Cicero developed a national reputation that had various facets. The town was remarkable for extraordinary industrial development but also for political corruption and racial intolerance. Berwyn's reputation has been arguably more positive. It is a city of homes rather than industry, and the classic image of Berwyn for local residents is the tree-lined street of tidy brick bungalows.

Profound economic changes arrived in Berwyn and Cicero in the latter decades of the twentieth century, as they did in many corners of the industrial Midwest. Factories closed, threatening the sustainability of tax revenues and leaving many residents without their traditional livelihood. More than a few residents left the area for other suburbs or for new futures in the southern and western states of the United States. The White ethnic population that remained grew older. The typical number of persons in a household shrank, and fewer children were to be seen on the streets and in the schools. By the 1980s Berwyn and Cicero had some of the oldest populations in the metropolitan region.

In the 1980s and with even greater speed in the 1990s, however, a new community began to move into Berwyn and Cicero in large numbers. Latinos, most of them of Mexican ancestry, began to purchase the homes, establish the retail businesses, and send their children to the schools of the two suburbs. By 2000 Cicero had become 77 percent Latino—though Latinos had been merely 9 percent of the population only twenty years earlier—and Berwyn is now 38 percent Latino.

This extraordinary demographic upheaval meant that Berwyn and Cicero were redefining themselves. Some aspects of their traditions and history such as industrial employment and European heritage were lost, but a vital and energetic new group, often consisting of immigrants, came to offer its contributions to the area.

To date little research has been done on the meaning of Latino population growth for Berwyn and Cicero. How are the communities changing? What are the needs of Latinos? What are their contributions? How has the larger community accepted the newcomers? Where are Berwyn and Cicero going? Clearly, community leaders, public policy makers, social service providers, and others in the local area will benefit from having a greater understanding of the Latino community's characteristics and the state of the Berwyn and Cicero communities into which Latinos are moving in such impressive numbers.

Assessing Latino Needs and Assets in Berwyn and Cicero

This report is an assessment of the needs and assets of the Latino communities in Berwyn and Cicero. A report of this type seeks to describe an area's social, economic, and other needs that, if addressed, will lead to a better quality of life for community residents. This report also describes the Latino community's assets that can facilitate an improved quality of life and that should be taken into consideration by governmental, philanthropic, and other actors seeking to effect change.

This needs and assets assessment is based in part on interviews and focus groups through which we spoke with 172 members of the Berwyn and Cicero communities in the spring and summer of 2001. We have included numerous quotations from those interviewees. We also present demographic, socioeconomic, and other data from a variety of sources and survey data obtained from our interviews with community members.

The report begins with an overall characterization of the Latinos of Berwyn-Cicero, selected demographics, and a brief history of the two communities from their nineteenth-century roots to the present. For a description and analysis of the fieldwork data, go to page 39. The methodology of the study is explained on pages 87–93.

Acknowledgements

The MacNeal Health Foundation

One of the oldest institutions in all of Berwyn and Cicero is the MacNeal Hospital, founded at the beginning of the last century by Dr. Arthur MacNeal. Untold thousands of area residents have been born at MacNeal and/or provided with lifetime medical care by the hospital. In 1999 Vanguard Health Systems, Inc., of Nashville purchased the MacNeal Memorial Hospital. The transaction provided the opportunity to create a philanthropic foundation using a portion of the proceeds of the sale, and thus the MacNeal Health Foundation was incorporated in October 1999. Through its grant-making the Foundation continues the 'old' MacNeal Hospital's legacy of service to the community by seeking to make a positive impact upon the health-related and educational needs of youths, adolescents, seniors, and the community at large in the Berwyn-Cicero area.

Notre Dame's Institute for Latino Studies and the Berwyn-Cicero Latino Community Initiative

The Institute for Latino Studies (ILS) at the University of Notre Dame promotes understanding and appreciation of the Latino experience in the United States through education, research, and outreach. The Institute is committed to research projects that are both academic and policy-relevant and include a significant component of service to local Latino communities.

In June 2000 the MacNeal Health Foundation selected the Institute for Latino Studies to carry out the Berwyn-Cicero Latino Community Initiative. The Initiative has two major research components, including the present needs and assets assessment and an upcoming longitudinal survey of community opinion and experience whose design will be based, in part, on the findings of the present report. The Initiative also includes service learning projects—in which university students work with local community organizations and churches—and ongoing identification of opportunities to promote local leadership development and training. Staff of ILS who are affiliated with this research report include Christopher Ahn, María Elena Bessignano, Allert Brown-Gort, Miryam Bujanda, Gilberto Cárdenas, Priscilla Clements, Sung Chun, Caroline Domingo,

Philip García, Rosa García, Kate Huetteman, Robyn Mann, Sylvia Puente, Zoë Samora, Wei Sun, and Betsy Station.

Sylvia Puente of the Institute for Latino Studies serves as Project Director of the Berwyn-Cicero Latino Community Initiative. She has had primary oversight responsibilities for nearly all aspects of the present assessment of Latino needs and assets.

Project Partners: DePaul University and the Interfaith Leadership Development Project of Cicero, Berwyn, and Stickney

For the present needs and assets evaluation the Institute for Latino Studies is working in partnership with the Egan Urban Center and the Center for Latino Research of DePaul University and the Interfaith Leadership Project of Cicero, Berwyn, and Stickney. These organizations have substantial experience in conducting research on local communities and facilitating the development of community leaders.

DePaul University was founded by Vincentian Fathers in 1898 to teach the children of immigrants, and the university remains committed to reaching out to first-generation and nontraditional students. The university has two principal campus locations, one in downtown Chicago and another on the near north side of Chicago.

The Egan Urban Center is named after Monsignor John J. Egan, who began his career as an urban parish priest in 1943 and received numerous awards in his lifetime for his work as a champion of the poor. The Egan Urban Center conducts programs to benefit disadvantaged communities in the Chicago area and currently conducts the West Humboldt Park Technology Centers Project. John Koval of the DePaul Sociology Department is affiliated with the Egan Center and has represented DePaul in this needs and assets analysis. Edie Diaz, a DePaul graduate student, assisted in scheduling interviews and focus groups and managed the collection and organization of qualitative interview data.

The Center for Latino Research (CLR) complements DePaul's commitment as an urban Catholic institution by advancing and enhancing understanding of the Latino experience. CLR invests in the empowerment of Latino communities in Chicago, the Midwest, and the nation by supporting qualitative and quantitative research, providing community-based organizations with university resources, creating learning

opportunities for future scholars, and offering insightful and useful publications based on the research of CLR faculty and associates.

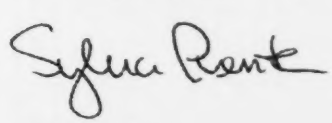
The Inter-Faith Leadership Project of Cicero, Berwyn, and Stickney (ILP) is a church-based community organization working to build power for families in the above-named communities. Jeff Bartow and Dolores Ponce de León are the Codirectors of ILP.

Staff of the Institute for Latino Studies at Notre Dame, DePaul University, and the Interfaith Leadership Project conducted nearly all of the field interviews and data processing for this report. Rob Paral, an independent research consultant, is the primary writer of this final report. Partial support was provided by the Annie E. Casey Foundation for additional technical assistance from the Inter-University Program for Latino Research.

Other Project Staff

An extremely dedicated group of primarily graduate students conducted and managed many of the interviews and focus groups for this project. They include: Adrian Aragones, University of Texas at El Paso; Guadalupe Martinez, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Alejandro Padilla, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Aníbal Pérez-Liñán, University of Notre Dame; Angela Sedeño, Loyola University, Chicago; Gavin Sosa, DePaul University. Two highly efficient assistants transcribed interview tapes and in general kept the flow of project information organized and manageable: Robyn Mann and Heidi Broadhead.

Some 172 individuals were interviewed for this study. While all agreed to participate, the following individuals consented to be acknowledged publicly. We thank all of the participants for their valuable time and insight. Without their generosity this study would not have been possible. On behalf of the MacNeal Health Foundation, the Institute for Latino Studies at the University of Notre Dame, the Egan Urban Center and the Center for Latino Research at DePaul University, and the Interfaith Leadership Project, thank you.



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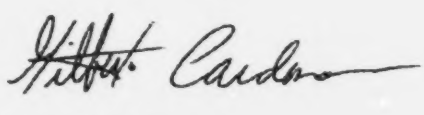

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Sara Barrera, Sarah's Inn
Matthew M. Brophy, Second Federal Savings
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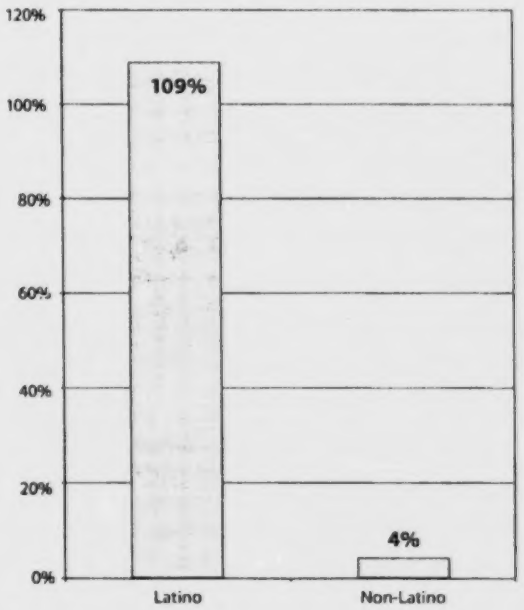
Who are the Latinos of Berwyn and Cicero?

Persons outside of the Latino community may have many questions about who Latinos are. More than a million Latinos live in the Chicago metropolitan area, but patterns of residential and social segregation have made the Latino population less prominent in the past. To begin this report, then, we provide a primer on Chicago area Latinos and their basic demographic, social, and economic characteristics.

Latinos make up 77 percent of the Town of Cicero and 38 percent of the City of Berwyn and are an increasingly important part of the local society, culture, and economy. The growth of Latinos in Berwyn and Cicero is an example of the extraordinary Latino population growth that has taken place throughout the region in recent decades.

Due to immigration and higher-than-average birth rates the Latino population has grown rapidly over the past three decades in metropolitan Chicago. The community's size grew by two and a half times between 1970 and the end of the century. This growth is especially remarkable in comparison to a slight decline in the non-Latino population of –0.1 percent in the same period.

Projected Growth Illinois Population, 1995–2025



The Latino population will continue to increase at a remarkable rate. Between 1995 and 2025 the Census Bureau projects that the Latino population in Illinois will double in size, growing by 109 percent from 1,090,000 to an estimated 2,275,000. In comparison, the non-Latino population will probably grow only slightly, by 4 percent from 10,740,000 to an estimated 11,165,000. By 2025 more than one in six Illinois residents (16.9 percent) will be Latino, compared to 10.5 percent today.

Diverse National Origins

The Latino population in Illinois encompasses about two dozen 'national-origin' groups such as Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Guatemalans, and the representation of these groups within the Latino community has shifted over the years. Mexicans were the first group to arrive in Illinois in

significant numbers, arguably beginning with the recruitment in 1916 of 206 railroad laborers from the Texas-Mexican border.[1] Beginning with the World War II years a large contingent of Puerto Ricans began to arrive in Chicago.

The aftermath of the Cuban Revolution led to thousands of refugees from that nation arriving in Illinois beginning in the 1960s. In the 1980s civil wars propelled a large number of Central Americans to come to the area, in particular Guatemalans. According to the 2000 census, the 1.5 million Latinos of Illinois included 1.1 million persons of Mexican origin, 158,000 Puerto Ricans, 18,000 Cubans, and 210,000 persons from a wide variety of Latin American nations from Central and South America and the Caribbean.

The growth of the Mexican-origin population in Illinois has been particularly strong, and Mexicans have been increasing their share of the state's Latino population. About 75 percent of Illinois Latinos are of Mexican origin, compared to 70 percent in 1990.

Residential Patterns

The Latino population as a whole has been steadily suburbanizing over the years. While 33 percent of the statewide Latino population lived outside of Chicago in 1980, this had risen to 40 percent by 1990 and 49 percent were living outside of Chicago by 2000. The great majority of Illinois Latinos, 70 percent, continue to live in Cook County, but growth in other areas is strong.

Latino communities are found throughout the metropolitan area, but major concentrations may be identified in the following areas:

- a corridor of settlement beginning in Pilsen near Halsted and 18th Street in Chicago and continuing west by southwest through Berwyn and Cicero and out into Lyons, McCook, Summit, and Hodgkins;

- an arc of population beginning in the near northwest side of Chicago (the West Town Area, roughly centered around Damen and Chicago Avenues) and stretching westward and northwest toward suburbs near O'Hare Airport such as Franklin Park, Northlake, and Bensenville;
- a collection of southern neighborhoods and suburbs including the south side of Chicago, Blue Island, and Hammond and East Chicago, Indiana;
- the Waukegan area;
- the Elgin area including Carpentersville to the north;
- the Aurora area.

Like most suburban residents, Latinos in the suburbs have often encountered better housing and access to work, improved schools, and safer neighborhoods. There also have been some problems. During the 1990s the US Justice Department filed five lawsuits against suburban municipalities nationwide charging housing discrimination aimed at Latinos. One lawsuit was in New Mexico and another was in New Jersey. Three of the five lawsuits were in the Chicago area, including Waukegan, Addison, and the Town of Cicero.[2] In early 2001 the US Department of Housing and Urban Affairs recommended to the Justice Department that a housing discrimination lawsuit be filed against the city of Elgin for selective housing code enforcement involving the Latino community there.

Relations between suburban police departments and Latino communities have not always been good. In recent years the towns of Highland Park, Hillside, and Mt. Prospect have all been subject to lawsuits charging selective policing 'racial profiling' directed at minorities including Latinos. A former Mt. Prospect police officer testified in federal court in January 2000 that police in that town stopped Latino motorists wearing cowboy hats, hoping to cite them for lacking insurance or some other infraction.[3]

Some suburban school districts have not been altogether successful in meeting the needs of Latino children. A study in the early 1990s found that only 1 percent of suburban teachers were Latino, while Latinos were 8 percent of the students.[4] Schools sometimes fail to provide a culturally competent education that holds relevance for Latino young persons. Also, each fall the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund receives complaints about suburban schools asking parents of Latino children for proof of US citizenship or for other documents that schools are barred from requesting by US civil rights law.

Political representation of Latinos has lagged behind population growth. There are only about 59 Latino elected officials in the Chicago suburbs, according to the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials. Turnout of Latino voters is hampered by low rates of naturalization, which we discuss later in this report.

To be fair, much about Latino settlement in the suburbs has been positive. To some extent, the Latino movement into the suburbs means that some Latinos have reached the 'American Dream' of a single-family home with a yard and two-car garage. Suburbanization thus reflects the increased income and economic successfulness of some Latino families. Latinos in the suburbs have higher homeownership rates and social and economic standing than their counterparts in the city of Chicago.

Some suburbs have also tried to be inclusive of the Latino newcomers. As one example, the city of Rolling Meadows has opened community-based police department branches in housing complexes where Latinos live. The police officers interact on a very personal basis with residents, earning trust and in return learning more about public safety needs. The police stations are also connected to offices that provide English classes and low-cost health services such as immunizations.

Suburban elected officials have become sensitized to Latino needs, particularly as political redistricting is based on the 2000 Census which promises to create districts where the Latino vote is relatively more influential than in the past. Also, many suburban business communities are aware of the importance of business development, particularly in retail trade, spurred by the arrival of Latino entrepreneurs.

What Does 'Latino' Mean?

In the Berwyn-Cicero area the great majority of Latinos are of Mexican ancestry and many, when asked what their ethnicity is, will respond with 'Mexican' rather than 'Latino'. We use the term 'Latino' in this report, however, because it is generally accepted by the community and because it is inclusive of persons with Puerto Rican, Guatemalan, etc backgrounds. There is also a certain trend among US Latinos to identify as such rather than use a national-origin label such as 'Mexican'. The word 'Latino' captures the experience of persons living in the United States who are affected by the immigration experience, by use of Spanish or Portuguese, and by a connection with a certain culture.

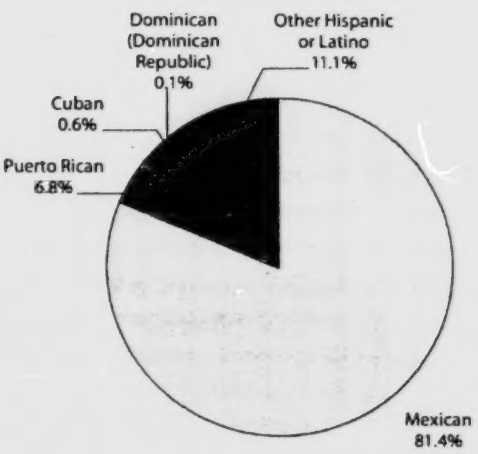
Berwyn-Cicero Latinos Have Roots in Chicago and Abroad

The Latino population in Berwyn and Cicero generally has its roots in the West Side of Chicago. The Lower West Side or Pilsen neighborhood in Chicago has been home to a Latino population for many decades, since before the Second World War. This area is roughly bounded by Halsted Street on the east, Ashland on the west, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe train line on the north, and the South Branch of the Chicago River on the south. This is a 'port of entry' neighborhood for many new immigrants, who often migrate west as they acclimate to US society, obtain steady employment, seek better housing and an improved quality of life.

West and south of Pilsen is the South Lawndale or Little Village community. This is a neighborhood of bungalows and two-flats not entirely unlike the older neighborhoods in Berwyn and Cicero, if more congested and older. Indeed, traveling through Pilsen

Berwyn Latinos by Type, 2000

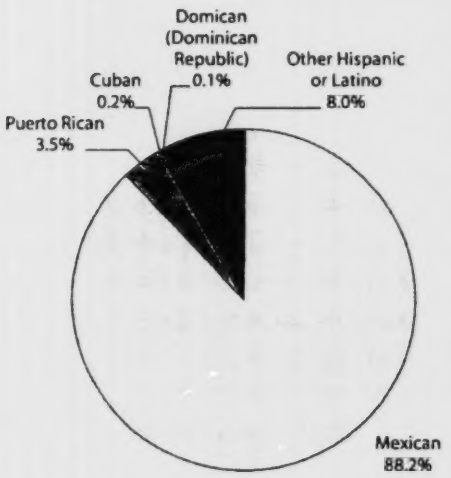
Latino Population = 20,543



- In the year 2000, Berwyn's Latino population equaled 20,543 persons, or 38 percent of the city's total population.
- The Latino population of Berwyn increased 475 percent since 1990 from 3,573 persons in 1990 to 20,543 persons in 2000.
- Over 4/5 (81.4 percent) of Berwyn's Latino residents in the year 2000 were of Mexican descent.

Cicero Latinos by Type, 2000

Latino Population = 66,299



- In the year 2000, Cicero's Latino population equaled 66,299 persons, or 76.2 percent of the city's total population.
- The percentage of Latinos residing in Cicero has increased by 165.9 percent since 1990 from 24,931 persons in 1990 to 66,299 persons in 2000.
- Almost 9/10 (88.2 percent) of the town's Latino residents in the year 2000 were of Mexican descent.

and Little Village into Berwyn and Cicero one senses an organic succession of architecture and neighborhood design that shows this long belt, from Halsted to Harlem, to be the immigrant settlement corridor that it is. European immigrants lived in Pilsen, moved to Little Village, and moved later to Berwyn and Cicero, in a fashion that is very similar to the Latino movement occurring in recent decades.

Not all Latinos in Berwyn and Cicero, however, have arrived from just east, from Chicago. As was true for some Europeans, a certain portion of Mexican members of the Berwyn-Cicero communities have immigrated directly to the area.

Mexico

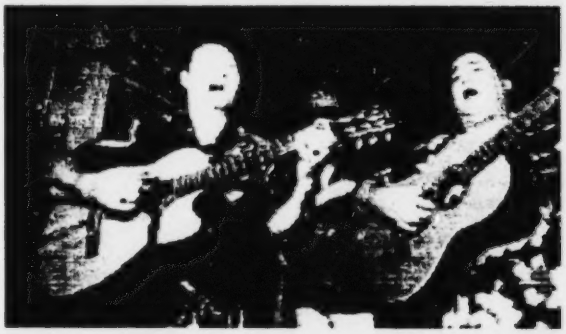
A brief description of Mexico is in order here, as it is the birthplace of many of the Latinos we shall describe in this report. Mexico is a country of 102 million people of diverse traditions and cultures. The nation is about one-fifth as large as the United States. Largely arid areas of northern Mexico give way to fertile highland regions in the central parts of the nation. Southern Mexico and the Yucatan peninsula have warm climates and often dense forests. The topography of the nation is extremely mountainous and includes active volcanoes in the south and central regions.

Politically Mexico is undergoing profound economic and social change. A single political party controlled national and most local politics for the great majority of the twentieth century. This party, the Revolutionary Institutional Party (referred to as the 'PRI' by its Spanish acronym), abetted and benefited from widespread corruption penetrating the highest ranks of politics. A former Mexican president, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, once a candidate for Secretary General of the World Trade Organization (WTO), retired in scandal and disgrace and fled to Ireland where he was safe from extradition and prosecution. His brother Raul is reputed to have ordered the murder of a high official of his political party. This tradition of corruption in Mexico gives some Mexican-born persons an understandably guarded opinion of politics.

However, in the July 2000 elections Mexicans elected Vicente Fox, a candidate from the National Action Party (or PAN, its Spanish acronym), in an election widely viewed as the cleanest in modern history. Many voters in Mexico see President Fox (a former executive of the Coca-Cola

Company) as having potential to stimulate the Mexican economy, and he has taken steps to reduce political corruption.

Prior to the mid-nineteenth century Mexican territory included a large swath of what is now the western United States, including Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California, and parts of Colorado and Nevada.[5] In 1845 the United States annexed Texas and declared the nation's southern boundary to be the Rio Grande River. Mexico rejected the annexation and new border, and the United States declared war on Mexico in May 1846. US troops occupied the Mexican cities of Monterrey and Chihuahua, among others, and in 1847 US General Scott disembarked at the Mexican port city of Veracruz, eventually marching to the Mexican capital and entering the National Palace. Mexico accepted defeat and signed the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo which ceded control to the North Americans of most of the land it had claimed in what is now the modern United States. Mexican schools naturally teach this history to school children and many Mexicans are keenly aware of this loss of land.



Mexican Population Growth in the Twentieth Century

The Mexican population in the Chicago area comes from all parts of Mexico, but almost 65 percent come from just five Mexican states, namely Michoacan, Guanajuato, and Jalisco in the center, Guerrero in the south, and Durango in the north. As immigrants successfully establish themselves here they tend to bring family and friends along at a later date, and thus streams of migrants originating in specific areas become established.

It should be noted that many Mexican-origin persons in Chicago are descended from, or were actually born in, the state of Texas. Many US-born Mexican Americans over the years have moved north from that state. Some arrived here as part of the migrant agricultural labor movement, which seasonally brings thousands of workers to harvest Midwestern fruit tree crops, de-tassle corn, and do other farm work. Other Texas-origin persons have moved northward simply to find employment and economic security not available in their home state, since wages and incomes in Illinois are, on the average, substantially higher than in the American South.

In this last regard, the movement of thousands of Mexican Americans to Chicago in the last century paralleled, to a lesser degree, the migration of countless African Americans from Mississippi and Alabama.

As noted earlier, Mexicans have been immigrating to Chicago for 100 years. In the early 1900s US railroad companies recruited Mexican laborers to repair railway tracks in the Chicago area. The steel mills of the Chicago area also recruited Mexican workers, in part to fill labor shortages of the First and Second World Wars. The oldest Mexican settlements in Chicago are in the southern part of the City of Chicago, particularly South Chicago but including Back of the Yards, where Mexicans founded the Sociedad Benito Juarez, a social-service agency, in 1919.[6]

The Mexican-origin population is estimated to have reached 20,000 in Chicago by 1930 but then declined to 16,000 by 1940 as a result of the Depression and the reduced availability of jobs.[7] The years of the Second World War created new demands for workers and the population began to increase again. In 1954 the US Immigration and Naturalization Service implemented 'Operation Wetback', which apprehended and deported numerous Mexican undocumented immigrants nationally and in Chicago and also illegally removed some US-born citizens of Mexican ancestry. But the overall Mexican-origin population continued to grow, augmented by immigration and the natural increase of the US-born population.

Mexican Immigrants and Their Reception

Mexican immigration is one of the most important demographic factors changing the American landscape today. Each year thousands of Mexican immigrants arrive in the United States through the regular immigration process (over 132,000 in 1998), while many others immigrate illegally. Illinois received 10,127 legal Mexican immigrants in 1998 alone and was the third-ranking state of intended residence for legal Mexican arrivals in that year, after California and Texas. Metropolitan Chicago ranked second among metropolitan areas receiving legal Mexican immigration in 1998, after Los Angeles.

Many factors combine to create the large-scale movement of Mexicans to the US and Chicago. Economic conditions in Mexico have been difficult for many families for generations, and conditions have worsened in important economic sectors in recent years. The North American Free

Trade Agreement, for example, has placed Mexican grain and corn producers at a competitive disadvantage to their US counterparts and has reduced employment opportunities in rural areas that produce those crops. Mexico has approximately 102 million persons living within its boundaries and at least 8 million Mexican-born persons live in the United States. In other words, almost one in ten Mexicans lives abroad in the United States.

There is an extremely large wage differential between comparable work in the United States and Mexico, so that a Mexican worker can make a salary in the United States that is eight to ten times greater than he or she could earn in Mexico. The US economy has also developed numerous jobs requiring relatively low skills and providing low pay which Mexican workers are willing to take though these jobs are unattractive to US-born workers. The United States has also had a labor shortage in recent years, and voices as influential as Federal Reserve Board Chairman Alan Greenspan have expressed concern that American economic stability will be threatened if sufficient numbers of foreign workers are not allowed to enter our labor pool.

The growth of the Mexican population has occurred in a different context in Chicago from that of other parts of the country. Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans in the Chicago area are generally more likely to work in manufacturing than those who live in the Southwest, where agricultural employment augments industrial and service sector employment. Perhaps because their numbers have been smaller in the Chicago area, some of the institutional discrimination and negative attitudes of whites toward Mexicans has been somewhat less here. Texas and California, for example, have a history of segregating Mexican neighborhoods. In recent decades widespread reaction to immigration caused California to pass an English Only referendum in 1986, that mandated the use of only English in many governmental transactions. In 1996 California voters passed Proposition 186, which denied a wide range of government services to undocumented immigrants. California has also passed a public referendum to end bilingual education in that state. This does not mean that Mexicans have always been treated well in the Chicago area, but up until the last decade or so their population has certainly not reached the high visibility that exists in Texas, California, and other states. This is changing today, as Latinos have become a large part of the

Chicago region's population. Berwyn and Cicero, with the dramatic growth of Latino population that has occurred there, are textbook examples of the kind of change occurring in many parts of the metropolitan area.

Public Policies Particularly Relevant to Latinos

Welfare Policies

Certain public policies at the federal and state level have been in flux in recent years and have important consequences for Latinos. In 1996 Congress passed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), which enacted far-reaching changes to welfare law. This is important for Latinos because a disproportionate portion of the population lives below or close to the poverty line. PRWORA ended the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program, originally created by Franklin Roosevelt in the 1930s, and replaced it with a new program that offers cash assistance to families with children for no more than five years and has a variety of strong incentives to move parents of these families into jobs.

The PRWORA originally derived 40 percent of its savings from cuts in services to immigrants, who are about 5 percent of welfare recipients. These immigrant-related cuts have made new immigrant arrivals ineligible for key benefits if they fall below poverty, including Medicaid medical aid, food stamps, and cash assistance. Immigrants can receive such help if they become US citizens, but the low educational and English abilities of Mexican immigrants, along with other factors, mean that few are able to naturalize unless they have lived here for many years. The effect of all of this is quite important for immigrant-receiving areas like Chicago, Berwyn, and Cicero. A large population of immigrants is accruing, Latino and non-Latino, who have little access to government safety-net programs in time of need. This is one of the most significant changes to the American public assistance landscape in many decades.

Immigration Policies

Also in 1996 Congress amended US immigration law. For legal immigrants the most important change is arguably a new requirement that the sponsors of legal immigrants have incomes at 125 percent of the federal poverty level or higher. This requirement was intended to promote the

entry of immigrants with relatively higher social and economic status. It also sought to end the ability of low-income families to immigrate relatives, the thinking being that they would not be in a good position to assist the migrant with resettlement here.

The problem with the new income cap is that a substantial portion of US Latinos do not have the means to immigrate family members under this new stricture. As these US Latino families are likely to have relatives abroad and are part of networks that bring workers here, there is pressure for some persons to immigrate illegally who, in the past, may have been able to obtain legal immigrant visas.

Potential Legalization of Undocumented

President Bush began to establish strong ties with Mexican leaders while he was Governor of Texas, and he made his first foreign trip as president to Mexico to meet with Mexican President Vicente Fox. Discussions between Presidents Bush and Fox have centered around the topic of migration from Mexico, and Bush has created a high-level team, chaired by Secretary of State Colin Powell and Attorney General John Ashcroft, to make recommendations on how to deal with the thorny topic of immigration. In July 2001 this team recommended that some portion of the roughly 4 million undocumented Mexicans in the United States be given the opportunity to acquire legal status. The team was also expected to recommend the establishment of some type of 'temporary worker' program that would allow Mexicans (and possibly other groups) to live in the United States and work here for a limited time without being required to get permanent resident status. After the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, however, it is unlikely that discussion of legalization will occupy much space on the policy agenda for the foreseeable future.

The topic of legalization for undocumented Mexican immigrants has many members of the Latino community keenly interested, given the presence of many undocumented immigrants in people's families, workplaces, and networks of friends. A local immigrant rights group in the year 2000 collected tens of thousands of signatures in the Chicago area from people supporting some kind of amnesty for the undocumented.

Bilingual Education

In 1980 Congress passed the Bilingual Education Act. The Act was intended to provide federal funds to schools that use a child's native language to teach subject matter while the child learns English. The justification for bilingual education is that children who are asked to 'sink or swim' and enter mainstream classrooms without knowledge of English will lose valuable instructional time, as they will not comprehend their biology lessons, for example, until they can communicate in English. The great majority of Illinois school districts including schools in Berwyn and Cicero provide bilingual education, as required by state law, when a minimum threshold of students speaking the same language (other than English) is met.

Bilingual education is a hotly debated topic with high emotions on both sides of the issue of whether it works or is a good idea. In recent years there have been some school districts attempting to end the use of bilingual education or drastically amend it. Most notably, California passed a referendum several years ago that largely ends the use of languages other than English in schools in that state.

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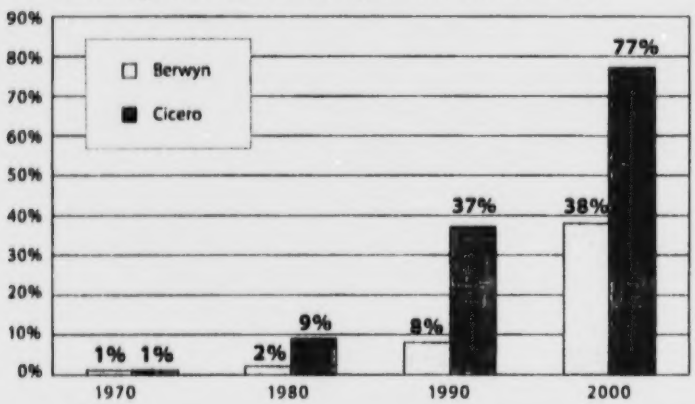
Latino Population Growth in Berwyn and Cicero

The 2000 census counted 85,616 persons in Cicero, of whom 66,299 or 77 percent were Latinos. The Cicero Latino population has grown substantially in just a few decades. In 1970 only 890 'Persons of Spanish Language' were counted in all of Cicero. By 1980 this had grown to 5,271. In 1990 some 24,931 Latinos lived in Cicero. The growth of the Latino population between 1980 and 2000 was 1,158 percent, or 57 percent annually on average over the period.

Percentages of Latinos in Berwyn and Cicero, 1970–2000



(Source: 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000 Census)

Latino Population Growth in Berwyn and Cicero

	1970	1980	1990	2000
Berwyn	660	1,128	3,573	20,543
Cicero	890	5,271	24,931	66,299

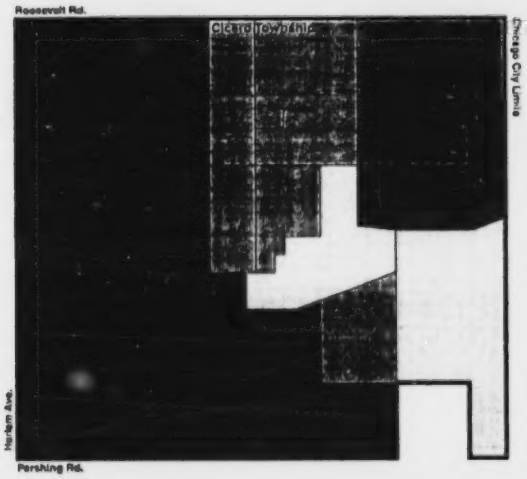
In Berwyn the 2000 census counted 54,016 persons overall, with 20,543 Latinos accounting for 38 percent of the population. The Latino population in Berwyn was just 660 in 1970, 1,128 in 1980, and 3,573 in 1990. Latino population growth between 1980 and 2000 was 1,121 percent, or an average of 86 percent annually over the period.

The combined Latino population of Berwyn and Cicero is 62 percent.

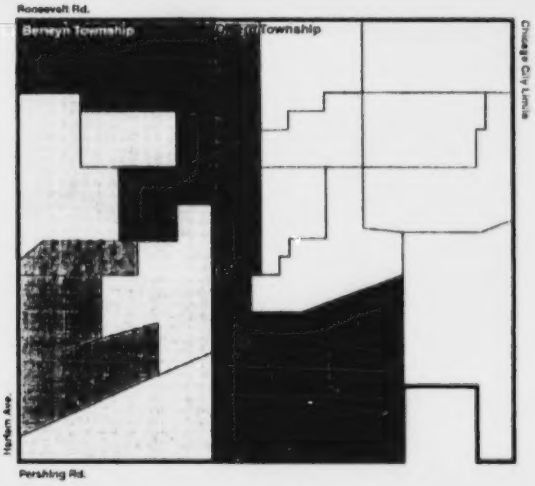
The growth of the Berwyn and Cicero Latino population has generally occurred in a fan-like pattern extending down and out from the Grant Works and Hawthorne neighborhoods in, respectively, the northeast and eastern parts of town. This is clearly visible in the accompanying maps.

THE LATINOS OF BERWYN AND CICERO

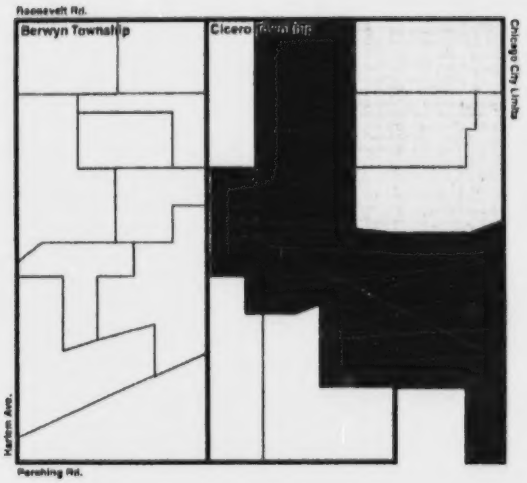
Berwyn-Cicero
White Non-Latino Population, 1990



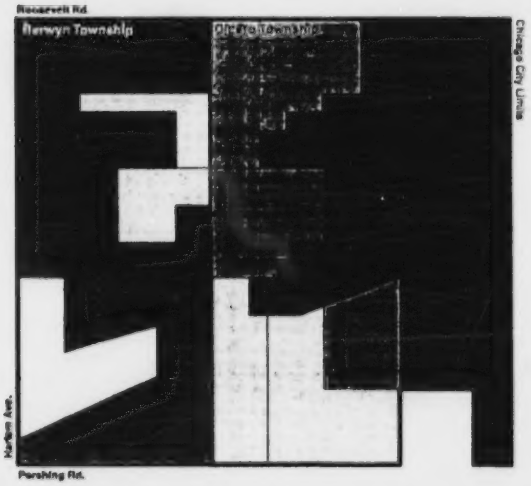
Berwyn-Cicero
White Non-Latino Population, 2000



Berwyn-Cicero
Latino Population, 1990



Berwyn-Cicero
Latino Population, 2000



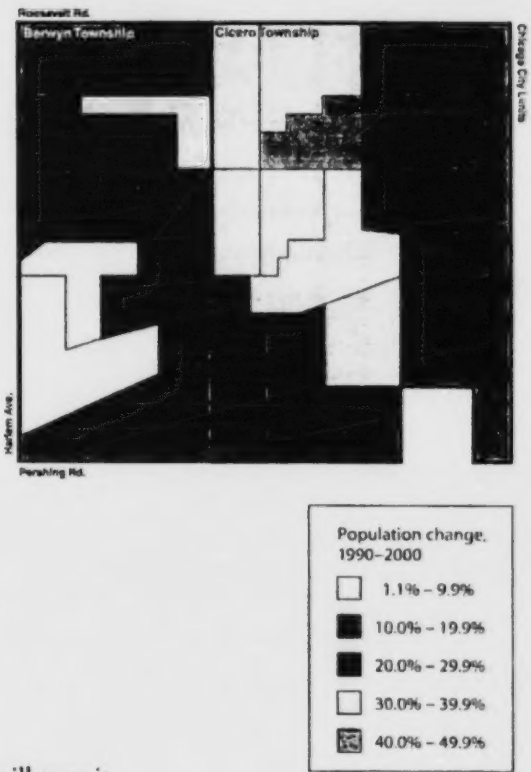
3.8% – 19.9%	50.0% – 64.9%
20.0% – 34.9%	65.0% – 79.9%
35.0% – 49.9%	80.0% – 95.0%

As the Latino population increased westward and southward in Berwyn and Cicero, the White non-Latino population receded in the same directions. The maps that follow show the movement of Latino and White non-Latino populations from 1990 to 2000 in the Berwyn-Cicero areas.

Many of the White non-Latino households in Berwyn and Cicero have elderly residents while others had relatively low numbers of children on average. Latino households are larger in comparison. As Latinos moved into Berwyn and Cicero, then, the overall population grew. Between 1990 and 2000 the Berwyn population expanded by 8,590 persons or 18.9 percent and the Cicero population grew by 18,180 persons or 27 percent.

The adjacent map shows how this population growth played out at the census tract level. The highest growth areas in the 1990s were in western Cicero and central Berwyn.

Berwyn-Cicero
Population Change, 1990–2000



Latino Social and Economic Status

The social and economic data from the 2000 census that will permit many observations to be made about the situation of the Latino community in Berwyn-Cicero were not yet available at the time of this report. To describe the characteristics of the community, however, it is possible to use data collected by the Metropolitan Chicago Information Center.[8] MCIC is a nonprofit polling firm that conducts surveys of the metropolitan Chicago population.

Some highlights of the MCIC data are as follows:

- The Latino population is substantially younger, with an average age of 35 compared to 45 for non-Latinos.
- A substantial gap in educational levels exist between Latinos and non-Latinos. Only about half of Latinos have a high school education (52 percent) compared to 86 percent for the non-Latinos.
- Almost half of Latinos lack health insurance. Some 46 percent are uninsured, compared to 10 percent of non-Latinos.

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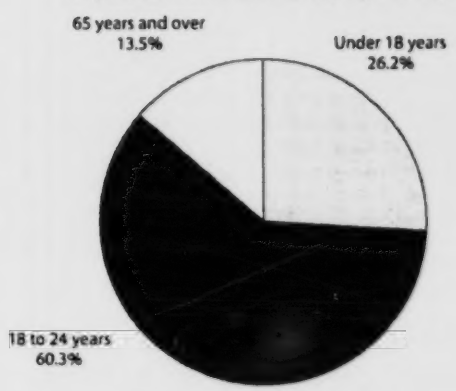
THE LATINOS OF BERWYN AND CICERO

	Berwyn-Cicero		Chicago Metro Area (6 counties)				City of Chicago
	Latino	Non-Latino	Total	Latino	White	Black	(total)
Average Respondent Age	35	45	45	38	45	50	44
Median Household Income ($)	20,900	30,400	44,700	32,200	49,600	29,800	34,700
Education							
% High school completion	52	86	89	67	95	78	82
% College graduates	2	19	37	14	44	21	33
Health							
% Population uninsured	46	10	11	27	6	15	16
% with no dental insurance	75	n.d.	39	50	37	39	44
Citizenship/Migration							
% Born outside of the US	70	5	12	52	6	2	15
Labor							
% Employed*	58	57	64	64	67	52	56
Family**	25	14	11	18	10	14	12
% Married	54	41	53	55	58	33	38
% With children under 18	65	30	40	62	35	47	37
% Single adults with children	19	7	10	18	5	26	15
Percent Catholic	87	62	42	75	46	9	38
Political Affiliation							
% Democrat	27	38	38	39	30	72	53
% Republican	7	19	23	11	30	3	11
% Independent	15	23	25	20	28	15	21
Total Respondents *(N)*	271	144	15,276	1,573	10,062	2,589	6,192
Percent Latino	65			10			17

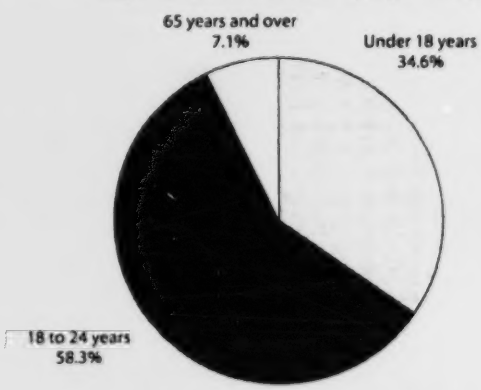
SOURCE: MCIC Metro Survey 1996–2000; D. Garth Taylor, *2000 Metro Study Report* (Chicago: Metro Chicago Information Center, 2000).
NOTES: Percentages represent the proportion of people in each demographic group who belong to the given social category (e.g., percentage of the Latino respondents in the Berwyn-Cicero area with a high school diploma). 'White' refers to White non-Latino.
* Employment figures based on total respondents (people 18 or older), not active population.
** Respondent declares him/herself to be dedicated to 'family responsibilities'.

Berwyn 2000
Population Distribution by Age Group



Under 18 years	14, 160
18 to 64 years	32, 575
65 years and over	7,281

Cicero 2000
Population Distribution by Age Group



Under 18 years	29,648
18 to 64 years	49,902
65 years and over	6,066

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Bilingualism

The Spanish language is omnipresent in Latino communities. The use of so much Spanish raises questions of whether Latino immigrants learn English fast enough and whether US-born children of Latinos are English or Spanish speakers.

The 1990 census found that 15.6 percent of the Latino population in metropolitan Chicago spoke only English, while 25.4 percent spoke very little English or none at all. The great majority, 59 percent, were bilingual. Bilingualism is thus the most common linguistic ability among Latinos, rather than monolingualism in either language. And most Latinos are competent English speakers.

The other thing that these statistics say is that a marketer can reach a majority of the Latino population *in either language*. If a retailer wants to reach out to the middle and lower economic strata of Latino consumers, Spanish may be in his or her best interest. This partly explains the use of Spanish-language signs in Latino neighborhoods, though it is also true that entrepreneurs in those areas may simply be Spanish-dominant immigrants.

US-born children of Latino immigrants often grow up speaking Spanish, and then learn to speak English as they become older and interact with a wider social circle. A group of Latino students in a Chicago public school were once asked to raise their hand if they spoke Spanish. All hands went up. Then they were all asked to keep their hand up if they spoke Spanish to their grandmother or grandfather. Almost all hands stayed up. Then they were asked to keep their hands up only if they spoke Spanish to their brothers and sisters. Virtually every hand went down. Thus Spanish is often the language used at home with elders, but the allure and pull of English is profound, and relatively few Spanish speakers fail to eventually learn English.

The census data on immigrants supports this. Of immigrants from Latin America in Illinois in 1990, 43.4 percent of those who entered the United States in the last ten years spoke English at least 'well'. But 65.4 percent of those who entered 10–20 years earlier spoke English, and 72.2 percent of those who entered more than 20 years earlier spoke English. Thus there is a steady acquisition of English.

The acquisition of English, however, can occur at different speeds. Bilingual education for children (as required by law) and English classes

for adults can help individuals learn English much faster than if their learning is *ad hoc,* perhaps only on the playground or at the place of employment.

Immigration and Migration

Not all Latinos in the Chicago area are immigrants. But many are, and immigration plays such an important role in the Latino experience that it is necessary to address the process of migration in any discussion of Latinos. The Current Population Survey conducted by the US Commerce Department reports that 52 percent of Illinois Mexican-origin persons are native born and 48 percent are foreign born. Applying these same percentages to the Berwyn-Cicero area would suggest that there are 45,000 US-born Latinos and 42,000 foreign-born Latinos. National estimates on the size of the undocumented population suggest that they represent 28 percent of all foreign-born persons.[9] (For Mexican immigrants the percentage who are undocumented is undoubtedly higher.) This suggests that at least 12,000 undocumented Mexican immigrants live in the Berwyn-Cicero area.

Immigrants come to the United States in basically one of four ways: as a legal immigrant, as a temporary visitor (such as a student or tourist), as an undocumented migrant, or as a refugee or asylee. (Many legal immigrants originally entered the United States as temporary visitors.) Very few immigrants in the Berwyn-Cicero area have refugee/asylee status.

Foreign nationals legally immigrate to the United States in basically one of two ways. The classic method is to apply for an immigration visa at an American consulate abroad and then enter the United States after being awarded a visa. The other method is to enter the United States under a temporary status, such as that of a tourist or student, and then apply to 'adjust status' and get permanent residence.

For the undocumented, a certain portion enter the United States by crossing the US-Mexican border illegally. But many enter the United States legally as tourists or students and then overstay their visas. Thus the popular conception of the undocumented as persons surreptitiously crossing the border is not the whole picture.

Many Americans have an immigrant ancestor in their recent past, such as a parent or grandparent, and many of us are aware of this nation's legacy as a country of immigrants. Nevertheless, it can be difficult to

appreciate the actual experiences of immigrants and how much their experience affects them and their families.

Students at Morton East High School have compiled a series of stories about their immigrant parents and have made these stories available to us.[10] The students' essays speak volumes of the immigration experience and do a better job of it than any analytical reporting. For that reason we excerpt some of their stories here:

Cristina

How did you first come to the United States?

"When I first came into the United States, I didn't have to cross over the river. I came walking with my two daughters. It was actually very easy for me because when I got here two girls helped me get across without being seen and they were only twelve and fifteen years old."

Do you like living here in Cicero?

"I don't really like living here in Cicero because of all the gangs. I don't even like to let my daughters go outside a lot because I'm scared they might get shot."

"I want (my daughters) to have a better future and go to better schools."

What was the biggest thing you had to get used to when you got to the United States?

"The biggest thing that I had to get used to was not leaving my kids alone because over here it's more dangerous."

What was the main reason why you decided to come to the United States?

"The main reason why I decided to come to the United States was my two daughters. I want them to have a better future and go to better schools."

María T.

The year is 1980. María T. is living with her beloved parents. She has two little girls, Magalí and Hilda. Hilda, the younger of the two, is just a newborn. Because of the great move, she was forced to make a decision which she regrets even today. For the next eleven years that decision affected the very core of her…When she would cross the deadly border, she would cross it by herself. María had heard stories of children who had been lost in the desert. Could that happen to her? She did not want to find out. María could not possibly take her two daughters. It was simply too risky. The oldest daughter, Magalí, had a bond with her Tía Ángela. María T. could not leave her newborn Hilda. María had to leave Magalí. She would be in good hands. Her familia would take care of her first born, Magalí. A mother's worst

"What if something happens to mi hija [my daughter]? Would I be able to forgive myself for choosing one daughter over the other?"

nightmare had come true. She had decided between her two daughters who were at that time her only children…

María like many other people came here illegally and with a coyote [smuggler]. She was with many other people—women, men, and children. They were all in the desert. It was hot and she was carrying her young daughter. They were by the border. Most borders are imaginary yet this American border that she was crossing had a tall fence. This seemed strange to María since she did have some knowledge of the meaning of the Statue of Liberty and of this country. At this point she did not care for the meaning. What she wanted was to be able to cross that border without any problem. There was a hole dug into the ground. One by one they all crossed. As María crossed the border, one of Hilda's shoes fell off. She did not notice that until later…

[In Chicago] many things did affect María. She was accustomed to living with her parents and having two little girls, Magalí and Hilda. Now her parents were thousands of miles away and her daughter, Magalí, was far away as well. To a mother not being able to call out both of your daughters' names is terrible. What if something happens to *mi hija* [my daughter]? Would I be able to forgive myself for choosing one daughter over the other? These adjustments were terrible for her.

The streets were ugly and crime was a daily thing. Gangeros [gang members]? What is that? In Mexico, there were gangeros but they were different. They did not use guns and were not as deadly as the gangeros from Chicago. These were some of the adjustments that María had to go through. As time would pass, these things would become less evident in her everyday life. They were part of how life was here.

María feels as if this country is her own now. Although she loves Mexico she would most likely not want to live there anymore. She loves it here! Her daughter, Magalí, is with her again and the family is complete after so many years. Magalí arrived here like her mother María. In 1991 she crossed the border like her mother and sister had done so many years ago. Unlike her mother, Magalí crossed the border with her two cousins, Norma and Freddy. It seems to María as if it was her destiny to come to the United States. María T. crossed the border seventeen years ago. She gave her children a chance. She gave me a chance.

Carolina

Carolina is originally from Zacatecas, Mexico…To get to this country she walked across the river and went to Laredo, Texas…

When she arrived in Cicero the first time she went out every day looking for a job…She soon found one and was very pleased with the way they treated her. They paid her minimum wage, but it was a good job which she did for sixteen years…

She knew English was a necessary tool to get by in the United States, but it was very difficult for her. She believed English is the ticket for getting treated better, communicating, and for defending oneself. She especially realized this after having her first child. While in the hospital, after giving birth, she was experiencing a lot of pain. She was unable to communicate her pain and therefore received very little attention from the staff [whereas] those who were able to speak English informed the staff of their feeling and received much better attention.

"…those who were able to speak English informed the staff of their feeling and received much better attention."

After encountering this treatment at the hospital, Carolina felt more motivated than ever to learn the language that could get her places in this country. She began to work hard to learn English. She took classes and is now able to speak the language…

María O.

My immigrant report is on my mother María O. She is 34 years of age. She came to the United States at the age of 23. The highest level of education she obtained was up to 8th grade. Things for her and her family were really rough and you needed a lot of money to go to high school. High school was like college for us. The job she got when she came to the US was at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare hotel. She was using someone else's social security because she came to the US illegally. Now she has a job [with another employer].

My mom [moved to Chicago] because we had family here. During the time she was leaving there was a crisis going on [in El Salvador]. The country's government was corrupt. The country was in between communism and democracy. People were choosing sides. The government ordered militias to go and kill those who tried to lead a communist revolt. The militia didn't know if regular people were guerrillas so they just went killing everyone. María lost three cousins and an uncle during the killings. So actually she came to the US by force, not of her own will.

"The militia didn't know if regular people were guerrillas so they just went killing everyone."

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Naturalization

Immigrants with five or more years of legal residence, ability to speak English, knowledge of US history and civics, good moral character, and lack of a criminal record are eligible to apply for US citizenship. Upon naturalizing the immigrant renounces allegiance to the native country and acquires nearly all the rights and responsibilities of US-born persons.

Naturalization has several important benefits. It allows immigrants to vote, serve on juries, and fully participate civically. It allows the naturalized citizens to petition for the immigration of certain close family members without them being subject to immigration quotas and thereby facilitates family reunification. Certain jobs are limited only to US citizens.

Approximately one half of adult Latinos in the metro Chicago area are not US citizens. This has serious effects on Latino political participation. Political jurisdictions with large Latino constituencies can be carried by candidates who receive relatively few votes, because there are so few adult citizens.

In 1998, however, the 7th US Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that only citizen adults should be counted in drawing political boundaries with census data. This drastically reduces the ability to draw jurisdictions with a critical mass of Latino voters who could be expected to support candidates reflecting the community's views. (Previous case law in the 7th Circuit held that districts should be drawn on the basis of total population.)

The process of naturalization requires that most immigrants take a test given by the INS in which they show knowledge of the structure of US government and American history. Most citizenship applicants also have to show that they possess a basic knowledge of English.

The testing requirements of naturalization are often a challenge for Latino immigrants. For many Mexican immigrants their formal education ends at the US equivalent of sixth grade. These persons may lack test-taking skills, study skills, and familiarity with the environment of an adult-level classroom. Literacy is another challenge. Some persons may be functionally illiterate in their native language, much less literate in English, and bringing their skills up to the level needed to pass the INS test can take many years.

For most of the twentieth century it was also true that many Mexican immigrants did not have incentives to naturalize. For many European and Asian immigrants movement to the United States has been a one-way

process, as costs of transportation and political conditions at home often made it highly unlikely that an immigrant could return to his or her area of birth. The fact that Mexico borders the United States makes the possibility of going home someday much more likely. This is heightened by the fact that historically many Mexicans were working in cyclical or seasonal jobs that in fact required them to return to Mexico periodically when employment opportunities dried up in the United States. Another fact is the ambivalent attitude toward the United States held by many Mexicans, in which the United States is both the land of opportunity and also the land of hard working conditions and discrimination. Also, technology such as telecommunications and television allow persons to maintain strong ties to their home country. These and other factors have usually limited the number of Mexican legal immigrants who become US citizens.

One of the most profound changes in the Mexican immigrant community of the last decade, however, has been the development of great interest in becoming US citizens. Part of this change is due to strong messages sent out by community leaders encouraging people to naturalize. Most importantly, arguably, is the anti-immigrant climate of the 1990s in which, during national debates on welfare reform and immigration reform, immigrants and particularly Mexican immigrants were pilloried by strident politicians. Patrick Buchanan made a run for the presidency in 1996 in which he routinely attacked illegal Mexican immigrants as an uneducated, welfare-seeking, national security threat. Governor Pete Wilson in California promoted the passage of Proposition 186 to deny many services to the undocumented and repeatedly condemned Mexican illegal immigrants and, in the view of many community members, Mexican legal immigrants as well. These attacks on the repute and character of Mexican immigrants and, by extension, US-born Mexicans, caused a surge in citizenship applications by Mexicans seeking to voice unhappiness at the polls.

Further encouraging the citizenship applications was a concerted effort by the Clinton Administration to increase naturalizations. Also, in 2000 Mexico created a status of dual citizenship for those nationals who acquire US citizenship; this will allow many naturalized Mexican immigrants to continue to own property and maintain certain other rights in Mexico and will remove some disincentives to naturalizing in the US. Finally, the drastic cutbacks in public benefits created by the welfare law created

a sense in the community that US citizenship was now more than ever an insurance policy to guarantee that in time of need a family could access government services.

The number of Mexicans naturalizing locally and nationally has increased greatly. The number of Mexican naturalizations nationally was about 18,000 in 1990 but 109,000 in 1998. The same trend has occurred locally.

Various nonprofit organizations assist Mexican immigrants with the naturalization process. These groups teach ESL and civics and sometimes even accompany applicants to the INS on the day of their test. Naturalization rates are an aspect of Mexican civic integration that is directly amenable to efforts by community groups and support of the philanthropic sector.

The Undocumented

Many persons assume that the great majority of undocumented immigrants are from Mexico. This is not true. A 1994 study by the INS estimated that only about 40 percent of the Illinois undocumented population was comprised of Mexicans. The next largest group was from Poland and after that numerous other countries (including many in Latin America) were represented. By 1996 the INS had estimated that the total undocumented population in Illinois reached 290,000.

It is true, however, that many Mexican-born naturalized citizens and legal immigrants originally were undocumented at some point in their lives here in the United States. About 75,000 undocumented Mexicans in Illinois stepped forward to apply for immigration amnesty when it was offered in the late 1980s. (They represented roughly one-quarter of all foreign-born Mexicans in the state in 1990.) So the number of Mexican immigrants who have violated US immigration laws is substantial. This is a sensitive but undeniable reality of the Mexican immigrant experience in the United States.

Undocumented Mexican immigrants in Berwyn and Cicero in many ways lead lives similar to those of other low-income immigrants from that country. We know a fair amount about their characteristics based on the population that received amnesty in the 1980s and 1990s. Their occupational characteristics include heavy representation in service and laborer positions. Their level of formal education is generally low. They may in fact be largely indistinguishable from the typical Mexican immigrant.

Contrary to some popular stereotypes that say Mexican undocumented immigrants come to the United States to receive welfare, this population is in fact ineligible for almost all of the basic safety-net programs available to low-income groups in the United States. They cannot receive food stamps, cash assistance, or Medicaid for themselves, though their US-born children may receive these benefits. Undocumented pregnant women are statutorily eligible for emergency medical care and prenatal care. Undocumented children are eligible for K–12 publicly funded educational services but are not eligible to pay in-state tuition at public universities and are not eligible for most forms of financial assistance for college. There are many children in the community who have lived virtually their entire lives in the United States, graduate from high school, at times with honors, and then see their education halted for lack of finances or financial aid for college.

Latino Families

A great many individuals interviewed for this report stated that 'family' was a critical element in Latino culture and that Latinos strongly 'value family life'. The meaning of family for Latinos can be difficult to explain to non-Latinos. In part Latino family life involves a certain closeness that third- and later-generation Americans may not typically engage in. Non-Latinos may have heard stories of their immigrant grandparents living in strong family networks where people relied upon each other more than today. Some of this can be seen in other modern immigrant groups such as the Arab-Americans of the southwest side of Chicago or the Southeast Asian refugees.

One interviewee for this project told of his Mexican-born wife who reunites with her five siblings every single Sunday at the home of their mother. Much of each Sunday is spent in this family atmosphere, where food is shared along with stories of the past week's events and the individual struggles and triumphs of the siblings. When asked why family is special, the interviewee thought for a moment and said that family members "are your best friends."

Latino family members often live in close physical proximity to one another. For immigrants being near family members can be a survival technique in a foreign land. The US legal immigration system actually fosters family reliance because family members normally sponsor a relative's application for a visa and promise to be financially responsible for that person.[11]

Employment networks can be imbued with family relationships. The administrator of a large factory near 31st and Kedzie in Chicago once stated that he preferred to hire family members of existing workers.[12] He said that family networks permitted him to rapidly expand his workforce when necessary. Employees would call their cousins, brothers, etc. and report that work was available; this system also ensured a certain quality

of the new hires, according to the administrator, as the existing employees would not want to earn a bad reputation by bringing relatives to work who were not reliable.

A Sunday drive through a Latino neighborhood is an excellent way to view the importance of family ties for Latinos. Extended families can be seen taking walks through parks together, with grandparents, their adult children and the grandchildren all together in a group. Mexican Catholic culture includes a practice known as *compadrazgo*. Men often have a *compadre* and women a *comadre,* a best friend whom one confides in and implicitly trusts and who serves as a coparent of one's own children. One interviewee for this project told of his Mexican-born wife who reunites with her five siblings every single Sunday at the home of their mother. Much of each Sunday is spent in this family atmosphere, where food is shared along with stories of the past week's events and the individual struggles and triumphs of the siblings. When asked why family is special, the interviewee thought for a moment and said that family members "are your best friends."

A recent study of older baby boomers by the American Association of Retired Persons sheds some light on the topic of Latino families. The AARP surveyed persons between the ages of 44 and 55 and found some significant differences between Latinos and the general population.[13]

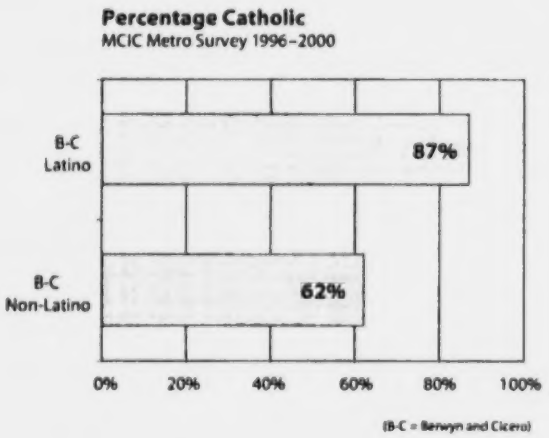
The AARP study found that Latinos tend to live in extended families with close contact among different generations. The surveyed Latinos were twice as likely as the general population (16 percent vs. 7 percent) to have had an aunt or uncle living in their household when they were children. Similarly, the Latinos were more than twice as likely as the general population (14 percent vs. 7 percent) to have had cousins or other relatives in their household when they were growing up.

Latinos are more likely to care for other people's children, according to the AARP survey. Some 19 percent of Hispanics aged 45 to 55 who have children also care for other people's children, compared to 11 percent for the overall US population. The AARP also found that Latinos are more involved in directly caring for elders. Some 21 percent of surveyed Latinos help their elder family members with highly personal care such as bathing and dressing, compared to just 12 percent of the general population.

About 40 percent of the Latinos in the AARP study contribute financially to their elders, compared to 27 percent of the general public.

Religion

Observers of the Mexican community in the United States including the persons interviewed for this report often comment that Mexicans and Mexican-Americans have strong religious attachments. As with other descriptions of Mexicans, it is possible to overgeneralize when discussing the role of religion in their lives, yet at the same time religion is a markedly important part of Mexican culture, and some broad observations may be made. Non-Latino Catholics may see in descriptions of Mexican Catholicism certain echoes of the religion of their own ancestors or of some other groups such as Italian immigrants, where religious practice played a large role for an ethnic group.



The great majority of Mexicans in the United States are Catholics. In recent decades some Protestant sects have made headway in gaining Mexican converts from Catholicism, and Evangelical and Pentecostal churches can be easily found in Mexican neighborhoods. Mexican Catholics include persons who practice regularly, attend mass, receive sacraments such as communion, and others who attend church only a few times a year, often on Good Friday or the feast of All Souls on November 2. A person interviewed for this project who is knowledgeable about Latino Catholics noted that for European non-Latino Catholics the two most important days of the liturgical year are Christmas and Easter, while for Mexican Catholics the most important days are often Good Friday, the December 12 feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and Ash Wednesday.

In the Berwyn-Cicero area some Mexican Catholics have become parishioners in their local Catholic church. St. Anthony's Church in Grant Works has the largest Spanish-speaking congregation in the Chicago Archdiocese. Other Mexicans may continue to attend a Catholic church in Chicago in a neighborhood where they once lived or grew up. Mexican Catholics tend to have a strong attachment to some Catholic traditions

that have lost popularity with other groups. Prayer of the rosary remains common, as is the honoring of figures such as the Virgin of Guadalupe.

The Mexican American writer and academic Rev. Virgil Elizondo writes that Mexican Catholics have never experienced the Resurrection of Christ in their collective consciousness and instead identify with the suffering Christ of Good Friday. Indeed, Good Friday, as opposed to Easter Sunday, is when many Mexican families congregate for a shared meal. The idea that Mexicans are moved by the suffering Christ figure is confirmed in the countless Catholic churches of Mexico, where often the crucified figure of Christ behind the altar is dramatically bloody, with open wounds and a visage of extreme pain. This sharply contrasts with the more idealized and stylized Christ figure found in most suburban American Catholic churches.

Mexican Catholicism has some other notable features involving family life and the home. One of these is the home altar that many Mexicans maintain, where a crucifix or religious photos or statues are adorned with fresh flowers and possibly food items. These altars and the attention given to them remind the household that religion is a daily part of their lives as opposed to a Sunday activity. Another religious or quasi-religious practice involves the Day of the Dead on November 2. Some Mexicans from more indigenous states such as Michoacan or Oaxaca have a tradition of placing favorite foods of a deceased family member out at the family altar between November 1 and 2, as tradition holds it that the dead are brought back to life at that time. In Mexico and in some parts of the United States Mexican families visit the graves of dead family members at that time and have a picnic meal at the gravesite. This activity occurs less frequently as Mexicans assimilate into American lifestyles, but it is true that on a warm Sunday Mexican families can be seen spending time visiting the resting spots of their deceased relatives at, for example, Queen of Heaven Cemetery on Wolf Road in the western suburbs.

Latino Strengths

Latinos in Berwyn and Cicero face some important challenges in areas such as political participation, immigration policies, economic progress, etc. But the Latino community has important strengths that must be considered in assessing future directions of the community.

Because of the extraordinary population growth of the Latino community in Berwyn and Cicero, Latinos are now a majority of Cicero residents and a substantial minority in Berwyn. Local policymakers cannot easily ignore the community and its particular needs in areas such as school overcrowding or adult education without consequences being felt in a wide swath of the overall population.

Latino population growth means that the Latino electorate is increasing and acquiring more influence. Thus in recent years we have seen the slating of Latino candidates by the Democratic and Republican parties in Cicero. Latinos will doubtlessly begin to occupy more and more political posts on school boards, library boards, and in municipal government. Latino leadership will have greater impact on the use of tax revenues for schools and parks, use of Community Development Block Grant funds for economic development, creation of tax-increment financing districts, etc.

The importance of the Latino worker in the regional workforce is gaining increased attention. Nationally, President Bush has frequently referred to the importance of Mexican workers to the United States economy, going so far as to appoint his Secretary of State and the head of the Justice Department to a commission studying ways to regularize Mexican migration. Federal Reserve Board Chairman Alan Greenspan has stated that the immigrant labor pool (including Latinos) is critical to the continued expansion of the American economy.

The need for Latino workers means that many employers rely heavily on Latinos and some can be expected to be providing educational services to improve the job skills of their workers. Labor unions have become a strong ally of Latino workers. Nationally the AFL-CIO has reversed its decades-old restrictionist immigration stance and come out to support immigration amnesty. The Service Employees International Union is another ally, given that many of its members are Latino. This and other unions lend their support to organizing campaigns in the areas of

naturalization and voter registration and have the potential to support Latino community empowerment in other ways.

Latino business owners are highly visible in Berwyn and Cicero and have revitalized commercial strips. The city and town will see a growing portion of their tax base coming from these establishments and should consider an incentive to assist these businesses to prosper. With some planning, the city and town could incubate more local businesses, given the high rate of entrepreneurship among Latinos.

The Catholic Church is another community ally. Latinos are disproportionately Catholic and the Church's future in some ways lies with the Latino community, as many white Catholics have left the Church. Various priests in the area have been strong advocates for the Latino community. (Catholic parishes, for example, are important contributors and supporters of the Interfaith Leadership Project of Cicero, Berwyn, and Stickney.) The previous Cardinal, Joseph Bernadin, came to Cicero and met with town officials and community activists to help improve their communication.

Some Latino organizations have been founded in the Berwyn-Cicero area, Latinos of Berwyn, for example. Some of these are nascent entities but with potential to mature and have greater influence. Meanwhile, some Latino or Latino-serving organizations in Chicago can be expected to begin to serve more and more Berwyn-Cicero residents and even to establish operations in the area.

Finally, the individuals interviewed for this project frequently cited Latino family values as one of the greatest strengths of Latinos. The strong bond that keeps extended families together helps the community to survive difficult times and makes the entire community resilient.

The Berwyn-Cicero Environment for Latinos

History of Cicero

The Town of Cicero has its origins in the creation of Cicero Township in 1857. At that time Cicero Township was bounded by Western Avenue on the east, North Avenue on the north, Harlem Avenue on the west, and Pershing Road on the south. Over time, the size of Cicero Township was reduced by annexations by Chicago and by the secession of Oak Park and Berwyn into their own townships.

Cicero grew rapidly in the early decades of the twentieth century. By 1910 Cicero had a population of 14,557 which had tripled to 44,995 by 1920 and rose to 66,602 by 1930. While today the oldest housing stock in Cicero is mainly in the north part of town, the original residences were closer to today's Burlington Northern Santa Fe railway line. A community named Clyde was established along the Burlington line in the 1800s, and a stop on the Metra commuter line still has the name 'Clyde'.

In 1919 the Hawthorne Works of Western Electric was constructed on what would eventually amount to 203 acres of land with 103 buildings[14] The sprawling plant employed more than 40,000 workers at one time. The factory made telephones and telephone equipment for the Bell System and employed large numbers of local residents. Hawthorne was the sight of the famous worker productivity studies, the Hawthorne Studies, cited in numerous sociology textbooks. (Workers were tested for their productivity under a variety of conditions, e.g., bright lighting.)

Other large-scale manufacturing operations were located in Cicero in the twentieth century, including a Ceco Steel mill, the Goss manufacturing plant (maker of printing presses), Danly Steel, and others. In the early years of the twentieth century the Grant Locomotive Works was located in the northeastern part of town which still bears the name 'Grant Works'. The Burlington Northern Santa Fe train switching yard located south of 26th street and north of Ogden, while employing relatively few persons, occupied a large swath of Cicero territory.

The heavy presence of manufacturing distinguished Cicero from many of its suburban neighbors such as Berwyn, where little manufacturing was located. The industrial base gave Cicero an important source of tax revenue which allowed property taxes on homes to remain relatively low and made

it easier for the working class to own residences. The factories in Cicero added to the town's industrial, somewhat gritty feel. Children grew up in the sight of smokestacks or within range of the clanging of a metal stamping machine. Up until the 1970s high school graduates in Cicero could realistically envision finding employment in their home town.

Well known for its productivity and blue-collar prosperity, Cicero unfortunately also became infamous for racism, including violence, directed at Blacks. The North Lawndale and Austin neighborhoods of Chicago border Cicero, and geographically speaking Cicero is a natural location for Blacks leaving the West Side of Chicago. Efforts by Blacks to live in Cicero or express their basic rights have been met with violent resistance. In 1951 a Black family attempted to move into an apartment at 6139 W. Nineteenth Street. Local residents rioted, throwing the family's possessions out of the window into the street and then setting them ablaze. Police were unable to contain the rioters and the National Guard entered the town and occupied the area around the apartment. Another incident occurred in 1966 during a period when Martin Luther King Jr. had established a presence in Chicago and was negotiating with then Mayor Richard J. Daley for improved African-American access to housing. King threatened to march in Cicero because of the town's history of intolerance. While King himself eventually agreed not to march (after reaching an agreement with Daley), a group of Black civil rights leaders did proceed with a manifestation down Cicero Avenue, where they were pelted with stones and showered with racial epithets.

A much more benign set of circumstances also marked Cicero and set it apart from other suburbs. The town in many ways was similar to West-side Chicago neighborhoods in that it was possible to distinguish the residential areas of particular ethnic groups. In the Grant Works area blocks could be distinguished by the presence of one ethnicity or another, principally Italian, Polish, and Lithuanian. The northwest portion of the town was heavily Italian, the central neighborhoods bordering either side of Cermak Road were Czech, while the Hawthorne neighborhood along Cicero Avenue south of Ogden Avenue was heavily Polish.

The various ethnic groups often established their own churches. Thus the Lithuanian St. Anthony's and the Italian St. Attracta's were founded within blocks of each other in the Grant Works neighborhood. St. Mary of Czestojowa in Hawthorne was a Polish church, and Czech masses were

still said until recently at Our Lady of the Mount near 61st and 23rd Streets. These churches were important parts of networks through which people organized themselves socially and identified themselves. Each parish in turn had a school attached to it as a mission of the parish, normally managed by nuns of a Catholic religious order.

While Cicero acquired a widespread reputation in the Chicago area and nationally for its legacies of industrial might, political corruption, and racial intolerance, its social and economic characteristics began to change markedly in the later decades of the last century. On the economic front the most important change was the collapse of the town's heavy manufacturing industries, an event that befell many Midwestern and Northeastern cities in the 1970s, '80s, and '90s. Cicero manufacturers employed more than 30,000 employees throughout the period from 1947 to 1972. By 1992, however, the number of persons employed in manufacturing fell to merely 5,700.[15]

Perhaps the cruelest blow came with the closure of the Western Electric Hawthorne Works. The factory that once provided thousands of high-paying, secure jobs to local residents found that its facilities had become outdated. Newer factories used 'in one door, out the other' manufacturing that took place in a single-story building, whereas the Hawthorne Works found itself saddled with energy-wasting elevators moving materials vertically through one floor to another. In the same period of the late twentieth century, of course, there were macroeconomic shifts in which durable goods manufacturing increasingly moved to Pacific Rim nations or to southern US states which offered lower-paid, often nonunionized labor. The Hawthorne Works, Goss manufacturing, Ceco Steel—one after another these economic pillars of Cicero fell or took their operations elsewhere.

At the same time that jobs were being lost in Cicero, important demographic changes were underway. Many of the European ethnics began to leave, some for suburbs farther to the west that were deemed newer, with larger houses and better public services and facilities. Others joined the national phenomenon of migration to southern and western portions of the US, either in search of jobs within the growing economies of those regions or perhaps simply to retire to a milder climate.

Oftentimes the husband and wife who bought their Cicero home in the 1950s never left: they lived in Cicero until they passed away, but

significantly their children did not stay in the town where they grew up. Many descendants of the European ethnics left Cicero because, in effect, the system had done its job. In other words, the Old Economy factories permitted working-class parents to provide their children with college educations that placed them into careers outside of manufacturing, careers that would be based in other suburbs or parts of the country. These children were often raised with aspirations of a more middle-class lifestyle than could be found in Cicero.

As the younger generation of Cicero residents moved on and their parents remained, a boom of sorts occurred in the number of elderly households in the area. By 1990 the median age of Whites in Cicero was 38 years compared to 22 years for Cicero Latinos. The older persons often lived on a fixed income and possessed the values and interests of a graying population. They might well feel unenthusiastic about supporting increased public expenditures for schools that they did not use. They felt vulnerable to street crime and endorsed strong measures to fight gangs.

Cicero Corruption History

Cicero has a long history of political corruption and Mafia infiltration.[16] In the 1920s Al Capone and Johnny Torrio set up their headquarters in Cicero, and during the Prohibition Era Capone used Cicero as his base of operations of gambling, alcohol running, and other illegal activities. Capone was feared in town, and he famously beat up the mayor of Cicero within the premises of Town Hall to show who was in charge. In another incident, gunmen firing from ten cars once emptied hundreds of rounds of bullets into a restaurant where Capone was dining, at the corner of 22nd and Cicero Avenue, in an attempt to slay the mob leader. These and other examples of lawlessness gave Cicero a reputation as a wide-open suburb.

The sense of an unrestrained atmosphere in some ways prevailed throughout the remainder of the century. Cicero was one of a few suburbs in the entire metro region that offered 6:00 a.m. closing licenses to taverns and allowed others to open at 6:00 a.m., thus making the town a place of 24-hour drinking. In the closing decades of the last century prostitution was common along Cicero Avenue between Roosevelt and 22nd Street, involving streetwalkers and mafia-dominated strip clubs. Gambling was also available in Cicero at two horse-racing tracks on Laramie Avenue

south of the Illinois Central railroad tracks. (One track is actually located in Stickney.)

By the 1960s, says the *Chicago Tribune,* Cicero was known as 'The Walled City of the Syndicate', famous for lax police enforcement. A Cicero police chief admitted that he made only one vice arrest between 1963 and 1964. In 1975 the Cicero Deputy Liquor Commissioner pled guilty to taking bribes. In the 1980s the federal government placed gambling conspiracy charges against Cicero Town Assessor Frank Maltese which ultimately led to his conviction. (After Maltese's death, the town named a public safety building after him.) In 1986 the FBI began an investigation into Cicero Liquor Commissioner Steve Bajovich, and he was eventually sentenced to ten years in jail for income tax and other violations.[17]

On 15 June 2001 the United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois indicted three Cicero officials for allegedly "diverting more than $10 million of public money to a third-party claims administrator for the town's self-insurance plans for their own personal benefit."[18] Figuring prominently among the indicted officials was Town President Betty Loren-Maltese.

History of Berwyn

The story of Berwyn begins in 1856 when Thomas Baldwin, a real estate developer from Cincinnati, purchased a 347-acre tract of land bounded by Ridgeland, Harlem, and Ogden Avenues and 31st Street.[19] He subdivided the land, which he named LaVergne. In 1862 Baldwin sold rights of way to the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad to pass through his land, and a decade later the railway established a stop in Berwyn. Baldwin envisioned ten acre lots but his land was subdivided further and by 1880 there were 12 new homes. The residents opened LaVergne school in 1888.

In 1890 Charles Piper and Wilbur J. Andrews bought land and created the subdivision of Berwyn, a freestanding community along with LaVergne. Piper and Andrews chose 'Berwyn' as a name from a Pennsylvania Railroad timetable. In 1901 Oak Park and Berwyn each voted to break away from Cicero township.

Berwyn's population more than doubled in the 1910–1920 period and then tripled during the 1920s, when it was the Chicago area's fastest growing suburb. The town's size went from 5,841 in 1910 to 14,150 in 1920 to 47,027 in 1930.

Although the residential boundaries of ethnic groups were perhaps not so well defined in Berwyn as in Cicero, the suburb nevertheless had a strong European ethnic cast during most of the twentieth century. The 1990 census found that 8,925 Berwyn residents reported German ancestry, 8,598 reported Polish, and 5,499 reported Czech.

The 1980 census found Berwyn to be a relatively more prosperous community than Cicero, though its residents had modest incomes compared to many other metro area suburbs. The Berwyn median household income was $31,326 compared to $27,170 in Cicero. The Berwyn poverty rate was 5.7 percent compared to 13.9 in Cicero.

The collapse of the heavy manufacturing sector did not hit Berwyn as directly as Cicero. The city was never home to a large manufacturing base. Much of the city's tax base has traditionally been derived from the retail sector, but this sector has been challenged in recent years. The Berwyn Plaza at Cermak and Harlem, built in the middle of the twentieth century, was an early prototype of the shopping mall that would change the way Americans shop for consumer goods. But the Plaza and the rich commercial strip on Cermak Road running through the city have had a hard time

competing with modern indoor malls such as the North Riverside Mall just west of town.

In contrast to its neighbor to the east, Berwyn has had a generally more positive reputation as a place to own a home in a relatively clean environment with good schools, transportation, and shopping.

Do Latinos Feel Accepted in Cicero?

In our interviews with 172 persons we heard Latinos and non-Latinos paint an extremely negative picture of the Town of Cicero *vis-à-vis* Latinos. Interviewees alleged at best harassment and at worst corruption on the part of town policemen, town housing inspectors, and the Cicero Republican Party. It is not the goal of this report to investigate the many allegations we heard. It may even be that some of the stories we heard were not true, but the frequency with which we encountered these reports from one interview to another makes it clear that there are profoundly serious problems in Cicero. Minimally the problems are ones of human relations, in which one group disbelieves another. More seriously, the allegations point to the possibility of an extraordinary host of abuses visited upon Latino residents of Cicero. Persons described fear of voting, fear of interacting with government, fear of even being known to speak critically of the town leadership.

In preparing this report we made several attempts to interview Cicero Town President Betty Loren-Maltese, but we were unsuccessful in reaching her. Similarly, we were not able to secure an interview with any elected official representing Cicero government who would talk to us openly.

Some examples of the stories we heard regarding Cicero and recent events that contribute to a sense of abuse include:

- Latinos feel victimized by town policies that cause extraordinary numbers of cars to be towed and levy large fines on the owners when they retrieve their automobiles.
- The Town passed (though later rescinded) an antigang measure permitting police to impound the cars of 'suspected' gang members. The measure left open the possibility that innocent town residents might have their cars impounded.
- Another town ordinance requires that new businesses provide a certain number of parking spaces. In some instances this reportedly requires

a new business owner (often Latino) to provide more parking than the previous business at the same location.

- In the 1990s the town adopted a housing ordinance that sought to limit the number of persons per housing unit. The Justice Department filed a civil rights suit against the town requiring it to rescind the ordinance. The ordinance would likely have prevented many of the large Czech and European immigrants of the early twentieth century from living in Cicero but was only passed after the arrival of Latinos.
- In recent years Cicero has cracked down on the use of basements and attics as apartments. Attempts to control population density to protect housing stock may sometimes be defensible, but the sense of many interviewees was that the move was an attempt to limit the influx of Latinos.
- The town made it illegal for children to play basketball in alleys or on sidewalks.
- Students attending public schools in Cicero are required to present five forms of identification establishing residence. Few suburbs have such stringent requirements.
- The town attempted to lengthen the time that political candidates must live in Cicero from 12 to 18 months, a change that would have prevented a prominent Latino candidate from running for office in the 2001 election. Again the US Justice Department intervened and the town was forced to rescind the ordinance.

Do Latinos Feel Accepted in Berwyn?

While our interviews about Cicero elicited a litany of complaints and allegations, we encountered more muted criticism of Berwyn and a sense that the city does a relatively better job than Cicero of interacting with Latinos. As one person put it, "Berwyn has reluctant acceptance. Cicero has active resistance."

One comment that we frequently heard had to do with the lack of Latino public employees or of bilingual/bicultural employees. Interviewees claimed that there were very few Berwyn Latino policemen, that no one in the Berwyn City Hall speaks Spanish, and that the school systems lack Latino personnel. One interviewee also stated that the youth recreational facilities in the city were filled to capacity.

Issue-by-Issue Analysis of Local Needs

The previous sections of this report described the general characteristics of Latinos in Berwyn and Cicero and the histories of those two communities. In this section we discuss specific issue areas involving the Latino community and provide examples of the kinds of comments we heard about these issues from our interviews and focus groups.

In our conversations—via interviews and focus groups—with community residents and persons knowledgeable about Berwyn and Cicero, we asked for their opinions on 13 issue areas: education, health care, social/human services, housing, employment/occupation, transportation, children and youth, immigration, crime and violence, law enforcement, local business, political representation/participation, community representation/participation.[20]

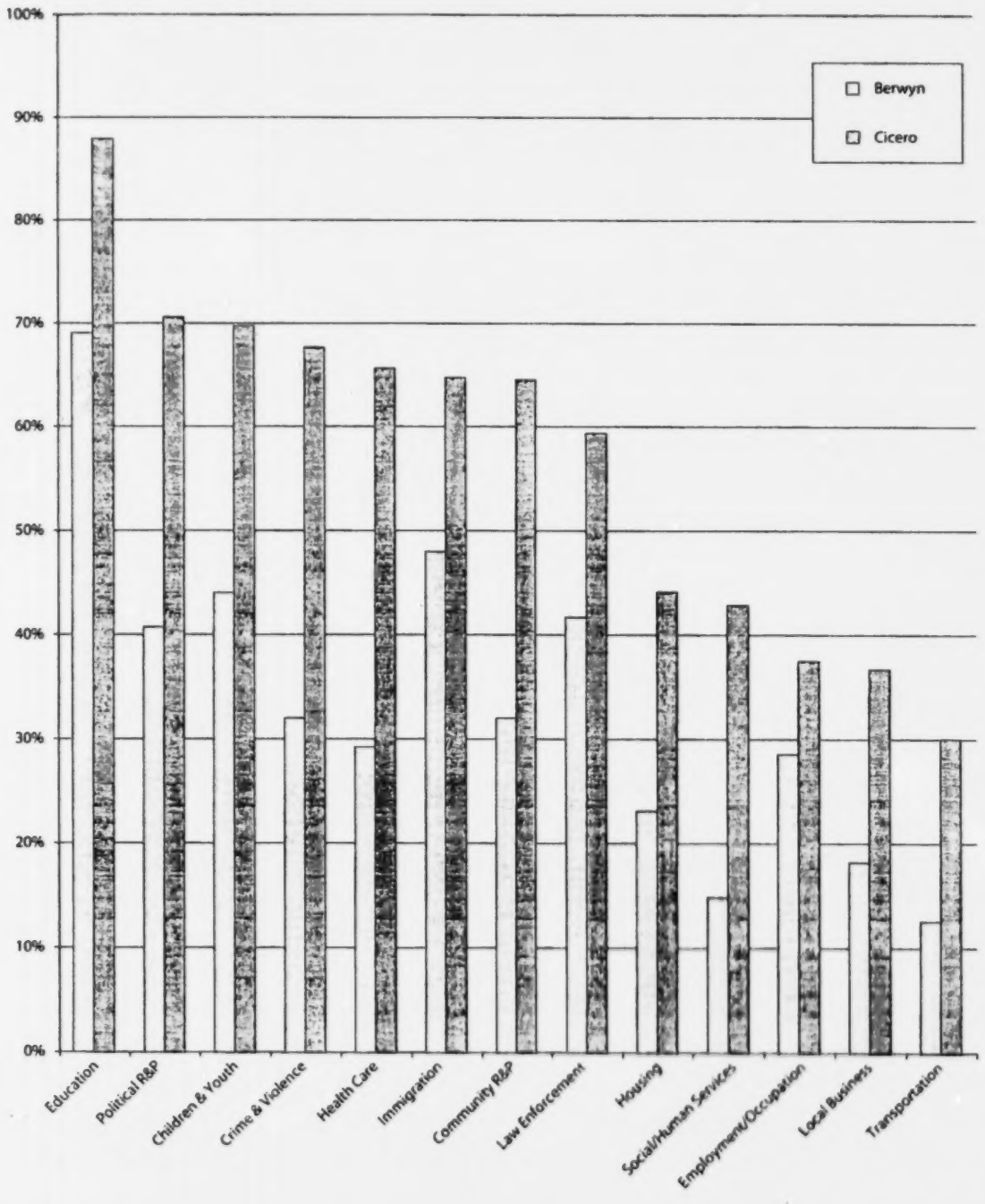
We also asked our respondents to rank these issues in their order of importance. The following graph shows what percent of respondents ranked these issues as extremely important in Berwyn and in Cicero. For example, nearly 90 percent of our respondents who discussed the Town of Cicero found that the topic of education was 'extremely important'. Slightly more than 70 percent of Cicero respondents found political representation and participation to be 'extremely important'.

The graph is interesting in several ways. In both Berwyn and Cicero education far surpassed any other topic area in terms of being considered extremely important. In Cicero, seven issue areas—political representation and participation, children and youth, crime and violence, health care, immigration, community representation and participation, and law enforcement—occupy a second tier of importance, with between 59 percent and 71 percent of respondents describing them as extremely important. Four remaining issues were ranked as extremely important by less than half of respondents.

In Berwyn the rank order of issues differed from Cicero. While education far surpassed other issues as being extremely important for Berwyn respondents, the second issue in Berwyn was immigration, followed by children and youth, and then by law enforcement. Thus there appear to be different sets of perceptions among Berwyn and Cicero respondents.

The graph on page 41 shows how Latino versus non-Latino respondents in the two communities ranked issues as 'extremely

Responses from Berwyn and Cicero Study Participants:
Issues Rated as Extremely Important



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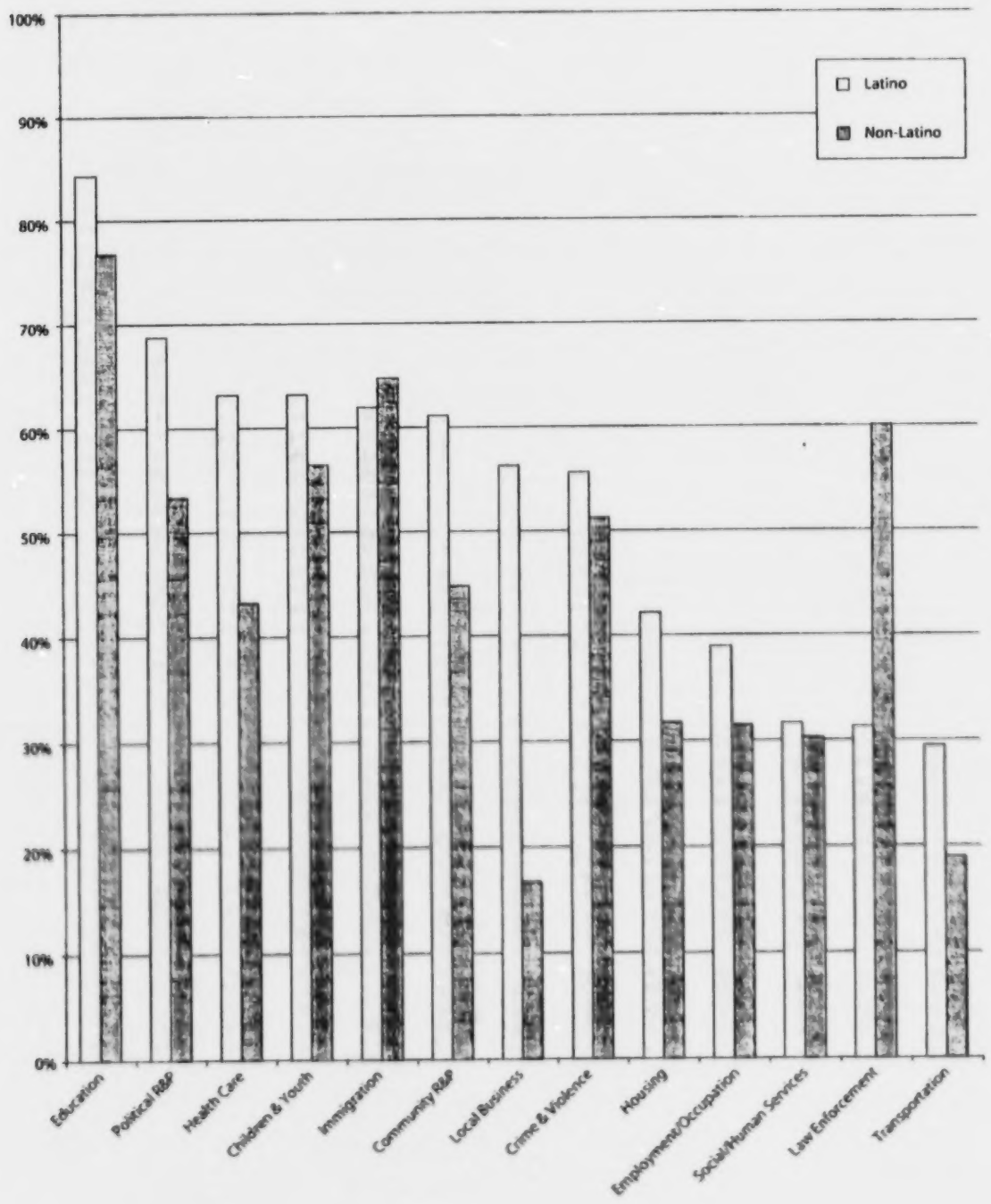
Responses from Latino and Non-Latino Study Participants: Issues Rated as Extremely Important



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important'. Both Latinos and non-Latinos were most likely to describe education as extremely important. About 84 percent of Latinos and 76 percent of non-Latinos said education was extremely important.

"I'm not sure there's enough daycare. Kids are getting raised by their siblings."

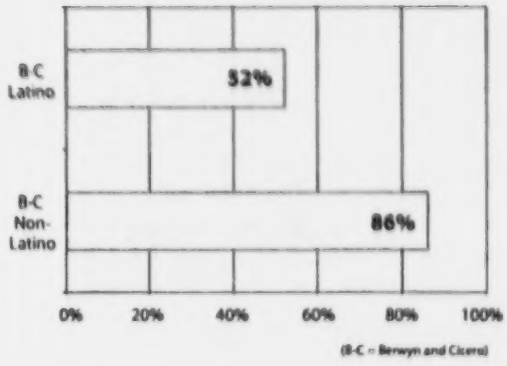
Clear differences between Latinos and non-Latinos are evident in response to other issues, however. More than 60 percent of Latinos described as extremely important the issues of political representation and participation, health care, children and youth, immigration, and community representation and participation. Of these issues, however, only immigration was described as extremely important by more than 60 percent of non-Latino respondents. Conversely, 60 percent of non-Latinos described law enforcement as extremely important, but only about 32 percent of Latinos said that law enforcement was extremely important.

For ease of presentation we have collapsed the 13 issue categories described above into 10 categories.[21] Our discussion of the major issues affecting Latinos and the comments of our respondents on those issues follows.

"Latino kids aren't failing. Schools are failing Latino kids."

Note that each of the following sections includes a set of findings related to a particular issue area. These findings come from our conversations with persons knowledgeable about Berwyn and Cicero, from our own analysis of empirical data, and from our research into the history and political, economic, and social context of the communities.

High School Completion
MCIC Metro Survey 1996-2000



(B-C = Berwyn and Cicero)

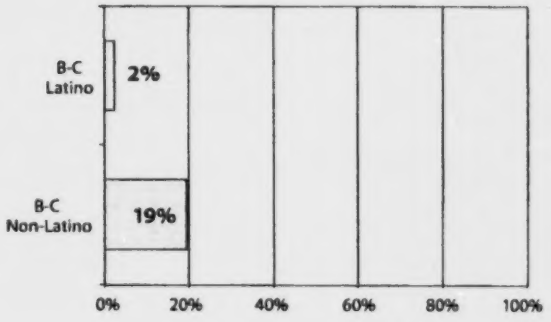
Children, Youth, and Education

Findings about K–12:

- The school-age population in Berwyn and Cicero has grown tremendously, with 16,000 new children added to the population in the 1990s.
- The school system is struggling to cope with the number of new students and their special language and immigration-related needs.
- There is a severe shortage of Latino teachers and administrators in the public schools to serve as role models and effectively communicate with parents.

- Relations between schools and parents need to be strengthened, schools need more bilingual and bicultural personnel, and parents need to become more involved with the schools.
- There are substantial numbers of children who are below state and national norms on standardized tests and a significant number of youth who drop out of high school. Career counseling and college enrollment are other needs.
- There are limited numbers of childcare and early childhood education providers in the Berwyn and Cicero community.

College Graduates
MCIC Metro Survey 1996–2000

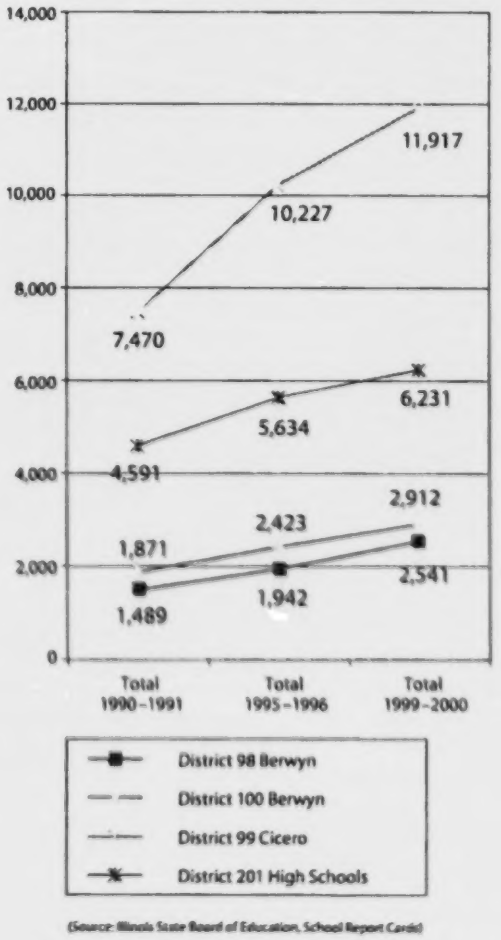


(B-C = Berwyn and Cicero)

Findings about Youth:

- Latino youth need after-school recreational opportunities that are relevant to their cultural experience and in which they feel welcome to participate.
- Youth gang activity is extensive and is a high concern for many parents.
- There is a cultural conflict between immigrant parents and their 'Americanized' children. In addition, there is often a cultural divide between nonimmigrant adults such as teachers and the immigrant youth of the community.

Growth in Student Population, 1990–2000



(Source: Illinois State Board of Education, School Report Cards)

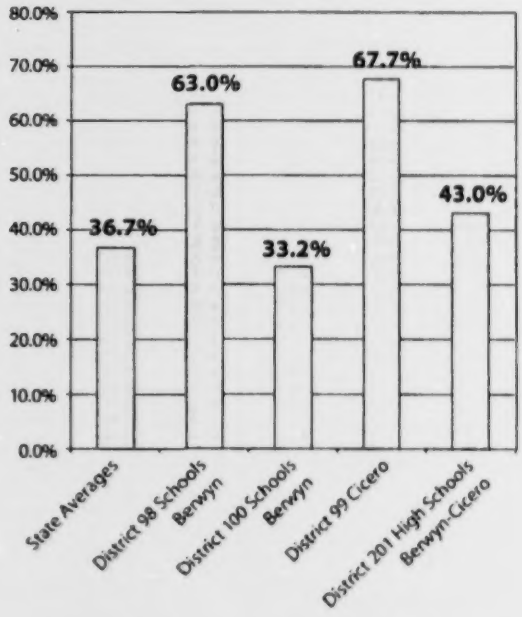
Findings about Adult Education:

- Interview respondents, both Latino and non-Latino, stressed the importance of learning English. However, there is a shortage of ESL classes. These classes should be available in various locations.
- Formal education levels among many Mexican immigrants are extremely low; many have fewer than six years of formal education. Hence, it is often difficult for parents to assist their children academically.

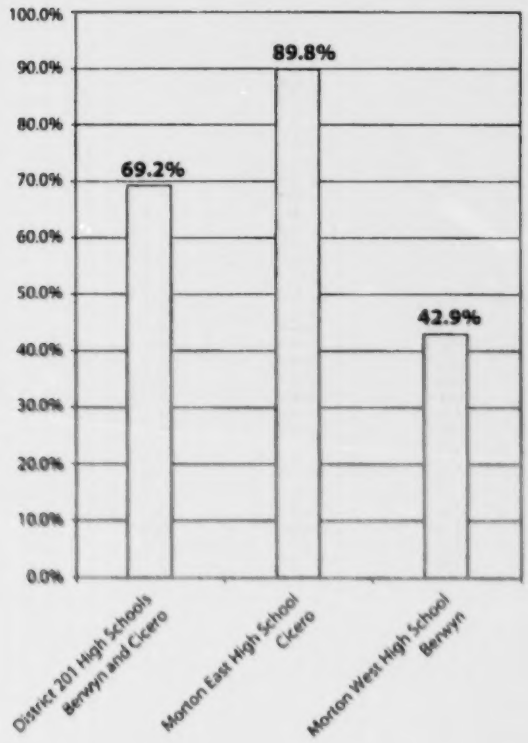
"[We] are never going to come close to the state average on the ISAT test. The state is 26% Latino; we are 92% Latino. The state is 16% low socioeconomic, we are 84% low socioeconomic."

The issues of young persons and education are a major cause for the Latino community. A high percentage of Latinos are under the age of 18. For Latino families with low economic status education represents a way out of poverty, particularly for their children. Education is also key to both economic and social integration, and the needs of young people in areas such as education, health, and recreation must be addressed to direct these persons toward academic success and upward mobility.

Percentage of Low Income Students



Percentage of Latino Students Berwyn-Cicero High Schools



(Source: Analysis of Illinois School Report Card Data, 2000)

There are various types of educational needs within the Latino community. For preschool-aged children there is a need for adequate daycare that is accessible and affordable for parents. Oftentimes this daycare should have a bilingual component or at least be sensitive to Latino culture and the need of parents to be able to communicate adequately with daycare providers.

"Dropout rates in high school are alarming and are a concern."

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In K–12 settings Latino students too often have relatively low achievement, such as test scores on standardized examinations. While 23 percent of all eighth graders in Illinois score 'below standard' in reading, for example, 54 percent in Cicero District 99 scored below standard. Statewide, 49 percent of eighth graders are below standard in mathematics, but 77 percent of students in Cicero District 99 are below standard in math. Additionally, Latino students have a high dropout rate and a high incidence of teenage pregnancy.

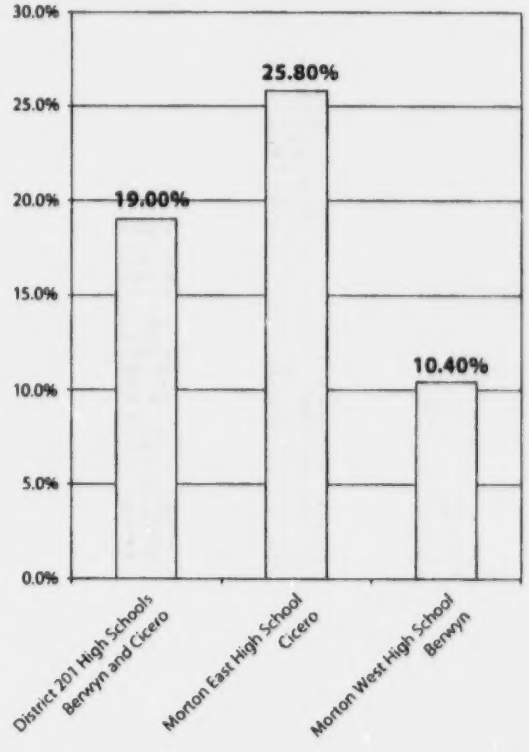
For persons beyond high school years, there is often a need to return to school for a General Equivalency Diploma. Persons in the workforce already can benefit from occupational training, either to help them get a better job or to stay competitive in their own workplace and have a chance to seek promotions. The modern workplace is continually introducing new technologies and methods that demand from workers, even low-paid ones, more advanced quantitative and analytical skills than in the past.

In Berwyn, the number of children under the age of 18 grew by 5,467 or 62.9 percent between 1980 and 2000. In Cicero the growth was 10,486 or 54.7 percent in the same period. This represents an extraordinary increase of 16,000 new children in the two communities in a ten-year period.

"There is a high dropout rate of Latino high school students and a high incidence of teenage pregnancy."

"We are doing very poorly on the ISAT test. They are bright kids but all the literature indicates that it takes seven or eight years to learn how to read and write in a foreign language and the state, in its infinite wisdom, says kids should be able to take this written test after three years of bilingual [education]. So these kids are doomed for failure on this test."

Limited English Proficiency
Berwyn-Cicero High Schools



K–12 Educational Issues

As noted earlier in this report, the non-Latino population in Berwyn and Cicero is older than the Latino population and more likely to vote. For these older voters, governmental expenditures on education tend not to be a high priority and, in fact, Cicero voters in the last decade have defeated various referenda attempting to raise tax rates for schools,

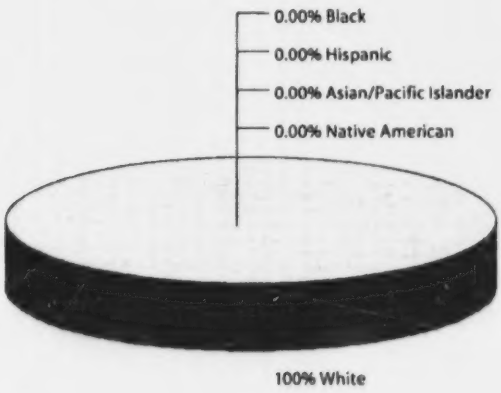
"In K–12 settings Latino students too often lag behind national standards in reading and mathematics."

to redirect existing bond funds toward schools, or to explore the use of tax-increment financing (TIF) mechanisms to provide funding for education in the area.

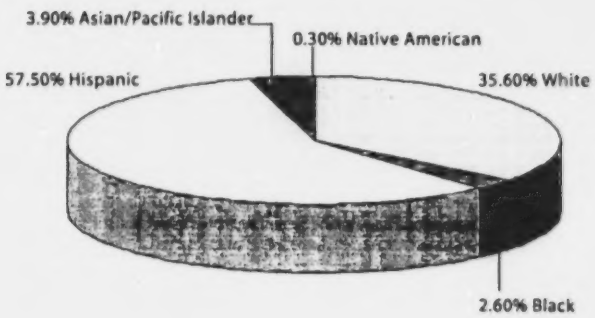
Latino parents value education and Latino interviewees frequently cited education as one of the priorities for the community. Yet low educational levels of Latino parents—combined with modern curricula that employ concepts and methods that didn't exist a couple of decades ago—mean that parents can have difficulty helping children with their homework beyond a certain level. Some Latino parents, new to the school system, the community, and possibly the country, may not be ready to participate in their children's school, much less aggressively advocate for changes in their school system. It is also true that teachers are highly respected in Mexico and other Latin American countries and are rarely challenged. So a culture of involvement and/or advocacy in the school is not in the experience of many parents.

Many Latino children need some sort of assistance with learning English, and Cicero, in fact, has the second-largest Spanish bilingual education program in Illinois. Many interviewees said that the schools need more bilingual and bicultural staff who could speak Spanish and effectively communicate with Latino kids and their parents. 'Bicultural' refers to an individual who understands Latino culture at a deep level, who may be Latino or have lived in a Latino community here or abroad.

District 98 Berwyn—Teachers



District 98 Berwyn—Students

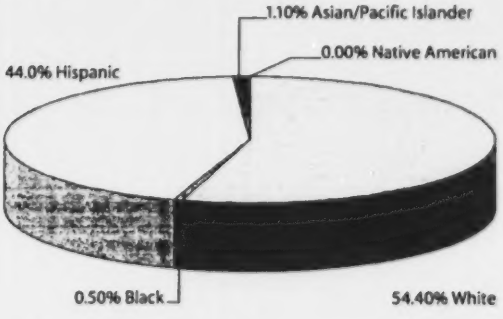


"I think schools have traditionally served White, middle-class students, and I think in the last decade, with the influx of immigrants, influx of Nonwhite students, schools that are 98% White majority teachers are now responding to a culture that is different in terms of values, learning style, language. Schools have done very little to respond to those...Our guess is that largely 50% of our students are immigrants."

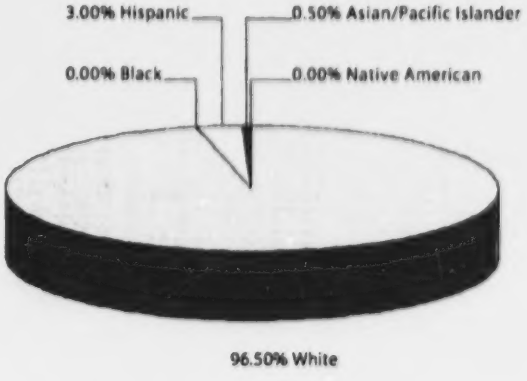
Bicultural awareness could help schools understand parents. One local school administrator expressed some disdain for the idea that Latino parents may need child care assistance in order to attend night ESL classes. Yet the reality of Latino families in the Berwyn and Cicero area is that many parents have young children and don't have the ability to pay for child care. Providing child care may simply be the cost of establishing an effective ESL program.

Undocumented young persons face special problems. They can graduate from high school, even with honors, yet be stymied in their attempts to go on to college because they do not reside legally and thus are ineligible for aid or are even ineligible to enroll at schools that require social security numbers.

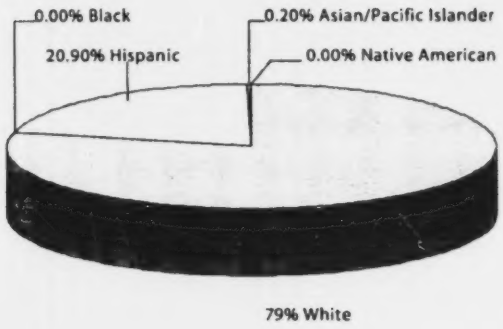
District 100 Berwyn—Students



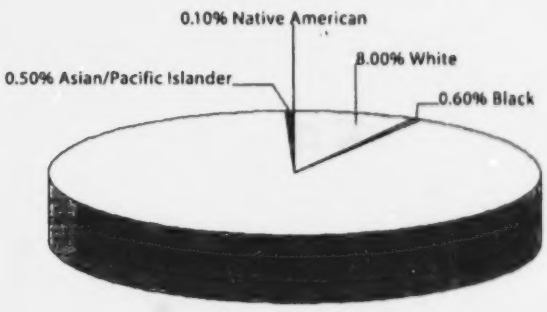
District 100 Berwyn—Teachers



District 99 Cicero—Teachers



District 99 Cicero—Students



"Right now, they [undocumented children] don't have access to any kind of financial aid, or federal financial aid, because they are undocumented. And yet they're finishing high school, and it just doesn't seem right to me that we are OK with them going to grammar school and high school but then that's it, they've reached their ceiling."

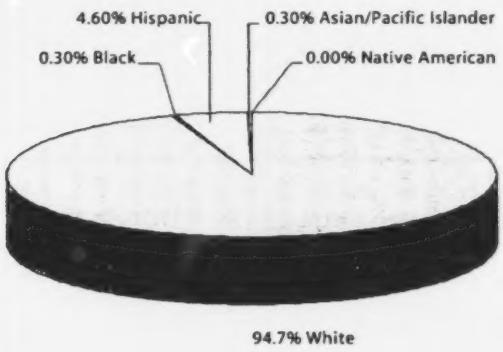
Youth Gangs

Many interviewees mention the word 'gangs' when the topic of Latino youth arises. In some ways this connection is inescapable. The presence of gang culture is prominent in many lower-income communities, including lower-income Latino neighborhoods where graffiti can often mar the look of a neighborhood and where shootings and gang-related crime are sadly the daily fare of the news media. In reality, gangs have been located in Berwyn and Cicero for many years. Italian and other European ethnic youth gangs existed prior to the arrival of Latinos, and some gang-related deaths involving non-Latinos occurred in the area in the 1970s.

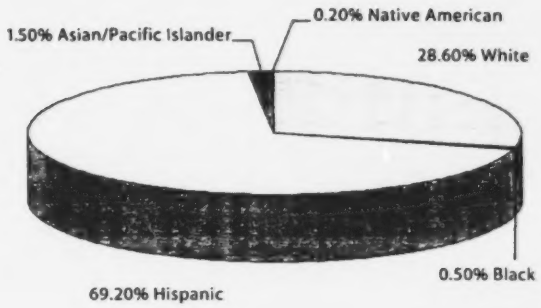
With that said, the presence of gangs in Berwyn and Cicero has become more noticeable in recent decades. Graffiti are more common; as is gang-related violence. Many young persons are attracted to gangs when there are not viable alternatives such as employment or youth activities such as sports or clubs. Latino parents and other persons interviewed for this report are certainly concerned about gangs, and they felt there were too few activities available for Latino youth.

"They're not dealing with the root causes of gangs. They're rather just reacting with increased punishment."

District 201 Berwyn-Cicero High Schools—Teachers



District 201 Berwyn/Cicero High Schools—Students



"Gangs are a huge problem here. Huge problem, and it is because of a lack of identity, lack of purpose for the student. It's easy to recruit to gangs and it gives them an identification."

The Town of Cicero has cracked down on gangs in recent years. As described earlier, the town seizes the cars of suspected gang members, sues gangs for monetary damages, and enforces a youth curfew. Some efforts to control young people are arguably counterproductive. A town ordinance, for example, prohibits basket hoops over sidewalks or in alleys.

Adult Education

Latino adults have needs for English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) instruction, vocational training, and classes leading to a General Equivalency Diploma (GED, the adult equivalent of a high school diploma). Morton Junior College at 38th Street and Central Avenue in Cicero is reported to be overwhelmed with demand for ESL instruction, even though the campus is difficult to reach by public transportation. Reportedly there are only two adult ESL classes available in all of Berwyn. Many Latino workers in low-skill jobs obviously would benefit from vocational training, but a comprehensive understanding of Latino needs in this regard compared to course offerings by Morton College has not been conducted.

"For persons beyond high school years, there is often a need to return to school for a General Equivalency Diploma."

"Recreation strained. Not enough room for programs. They close their eyes and the hope of program directors is for kids not to participate. If ten percent of school district attended, it would be too much. We are lucky they are not participating because if they were, we would not know where to go with them."

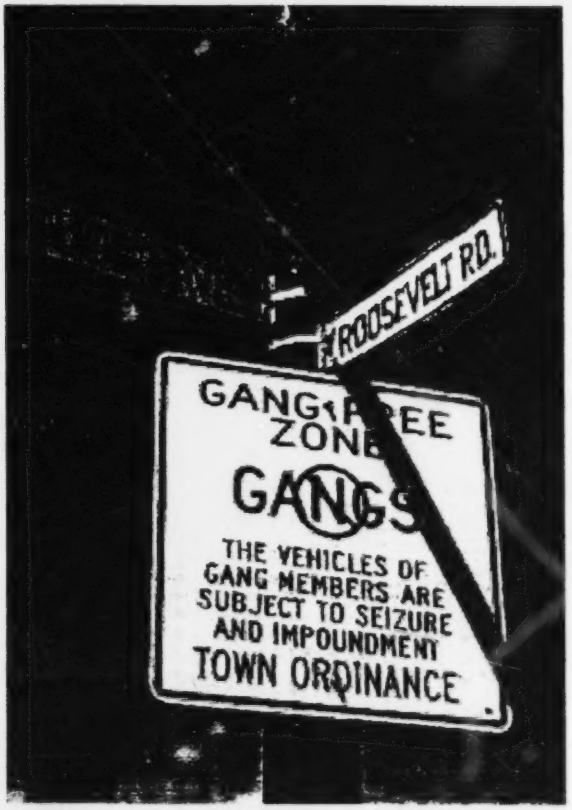
What Should Be Done? Suggestions from Interviewees

Berwyn

- Find more Latino teachers.
- Provide more money for education.
- Reduce teenage pregnancy through education.
- Do a better job with teacher training.
- Offer more ESL classes.
- Create programs to help integrate Latino kids into the system.
- Social services are very important.
- The literacy issue is the most important thing.
- We need a solid strategy on addressing overcrowding issues and early childhood assistance.
- Create full-service schools open into the evening, offering a variety of services.
- Have leadership that is bilingual and bicultural.
- Provide more education in the building trades.
- Create more employment.
- Give outreach to troubled teens who are dropping out.
- Create parent mentors paid to be in the classroom.
- Expand after-school recreational programs.

Cicero

- We need more space and classrooms.
- We need better funding for education.
- We need more responsiveness from elected officials.
- We need adult education classes.
- Bring in more Latino teachers.
- We need more ESL for the parents.
- Bring people together to discuss needs.
- Create after-school programs, summer programs, daycare, prevention programs.
- We need childcare for parents in adult education.
- We need parenting classes.
- Give parents choice in education through vouchers.
- Have leadership that is bilingual and bicultural.



- Reach out to troubled teens.
- Create parent mentors paid to be in the classroom.
- Have activities for young people.
- Have programs that get families involved.
- Find out whether programs to teach English are working.
- Help all kids, including the undocumented, get into college.
- Lower the dropout rate.
- Help kids stay out of gangs.
- Provide cultural training for teachers.
- Promote parent involvement in schools.
- Provide gang education for parents.

Political and Community Representation and Participation

Findings:

- Many Latinos wish to naturalize and become citizens and would benefit from assistance in applying for citizenship.
- Many Latinos feel intimidated by the Cicero and to some extent Berwyn governments.
- There is a need to bridge the divide that exists between older, established residents and the new Latino residents of the community. Similarly, there is a need to facilitate dialogue between and among existing institutions and the Latino serving organizations and their leadership.
- There is a limited amount of political and civic participation by many Latinos in Berwyn and Cicero. This is due to many factors, including unfamiliarity with the social and political structures of a new country, fear due to undocumented immigration status, and preoccupation with economic survival.

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Compared to other racial and ethnic groups the Latino community has a relatively low turnout of voters. This is due to several factors. In metropolitan Chicago approximately half of the adult Latino population are not US citizens and therefore are ineligible to register to vote. Latinos also have relatively low rates of homeownership, low income, and low educational levels; characteristics that are closely associated with low voter turnout. Low voter participation by Latinos means that relatively few Latino political candidates get elected, so even a town like Cicero that is almost 80 percent Latino can have non-Latino elected officials in most positions.

Low Latino voter registration is a problem that can be positively changed by community and philanthropic intervention. Mexican and other immigrants have shown great interest in naturalization in recent years. Most persons hoping to naturalize, however, need help in studying and preparing for the INS test of English and civics. Community groups, with funding, can put many people on the road to US citizenship.

Some arrangements serve to limit the Latino vote even when there is substantial participation. Most observers of politics agree that a 'community of interest' such as Latinos is more likely to elect its own candidates when a political jurisdiction is divided into subdistricts. Thus, the fact that Cicero town trustees are elected 'at large', in town-wide races, makes it harder for a minority group, concentrated as they are in certain neighborhoods, to put a member of its group into office. Cicero tried to install still another barrier to Latino political enfranchisement in 1999 when it attempted to make candidates for office reside in the town for 18 rather than the 12 months required by state law. The threat of a Justice Department lawsuit forced the town to back down from the proposed residency requirement.

In the areas of community representation and participation there are clearly human relations problems between Latinos and the non-Latino population. These two groups are separated by language, history, and often by social class. Efforts are needed to create communication between long-established residents and Latino newcomers. These efforts are needed at the one-on-one individual level and also at the level of organizations and institutions.

"They [Latinos] don't really have a strong voting block at all. Most of our [students'] parents are not registered voters. They do not participate in the process. They don't want any part of it. They shut their door, they won't respond."

"No elected officials. No departmental heads. Politicians have their head in the sand. City jobs, five to ten percent. Only two people in City Hall speak Spanish. Does not give off a 'you're welcome' type attitude."

"For hiring in city, everything is very patronage and since Hispanics not involved politically. Pull a lot of strings to get a Hispanic on the payroll."

"They moved here from Mexico and maybe they haven't had a big voice in government. They tend to distrust it and so forth and don't want to get involved."

"I also don't think there is anybody when you go in to pay your city sticker or pay your taxes that speaks Spanish in city hall. I don't think there is a Spanish-speaking person there. So if someone comes in and speaks only Spanish I don't know if they would be able to speak to them. So have Spanish-speaking people, at least at the counter when people come in."

"I think just in terms of making sure that governmental agencies have enough bilingual staff, are culturally sensitive to the change in population, are gonna provide services to people in Spanish as well as English as well as any other language that they might have. So I think certainly those, that's a pressing issue. I think that there's been some change within Cicero in the last five years, but it's not nearly to the point where a person who's monolingual Spanish might feel very comfortable going to town hall and asking for services. I think you've seen some incremental hiring of bilingual staff; I don't know if it has, you know, basically dealt with the issue, but I know that there has been some staff hired in the past five years."

"Yeah, for me, that was the thing that was most striking [about Cicero Latinos]...as to how tepid a political voice the Latino community had. And I think part of it has to do with voter registration and part of it has to do with participation at the polls. But there was no question that...there seems to be very little real representation in Cicero."

"Surprised by the low number of Latino voters in this past mayoral election. And the other thing that struck me, that related to this, was simply the number of Latino families and business people who were cowed by the political muscle of some of the town leaders… and who when they would run afoul of the town leaders that there would be housing inspectors sent out to their businesses or homes."

"I think it's people that are eligible to vote are not voting because they're afraid of intimidation, they're afraid of what a vote for somebody different other than the current government may do to them on a very day-to-day level whether their water's gonna get shut off, whether they're gonna be harassed by the police anymore, whether the code, there's gonna be inspectors coming in for a code violation. Those are the kinds of things we've heard has happened to folks who either vocally opposed the current administration or indicate that they might oppose [it]."

"I know the people in this room, and there's going to be a number on the interview so I can talk about it, but I would avoid conversation with most people, with most colleagues, just because you're really surprised to find out where they stand on criticizing the town's administration. You hear horror stories about repercussions and I think that affects everybody. I don't even live here and it monitors with whom I talk."

"Our lack of political representation is mostly because we need people who vote… And mostly people, first, don't have the right to vote because they are still in the process of becoming citizens. And sometimes when they become citizens, they are already tired and they don't want to get mixed up in political things."

"Berwyn has reluctant acceptance; Cicero has active resistance. So, in Cicero we just have to/there's been a political leadership problem for a generation or longer there. Most of the local residents accepted frankly crooked political activity because they did a halfway decent job of collecting the garbage and keeping the streets safe and that's what most people wanted from their local politics. So, it was a decent police with decent but not so good schools and modest cost. But when the community became more diverse, it isn't working,

and if you exclude an element of a community, you're creating a tinderbox and Cicero is a tinderbox."

"I have been to the Berwyn Town Hall twice in the last month for garage sale permit and for my garage sale sticker and there were absolutely zero bilingual staff. I mean there were a lot of Latinos in line who English was maybe not even their second language. They were Spanish-only speakers and first of all they [Town Hall officials] are not the friendliest people and then you know when there is a language barrier it is just that much worse. But I did not see a single person who even based on physical appearance I would assume are bilingual or made an attempt to communicate to those people in any language other than English."

"There are many peôple who are either new immigrants or first generation who may not quite understand how the system works here, and if there could be some programs to help dialogue occur, that could really be helpful."

"Need strong Latino organization in community."

"I think there needs to be a development of a group [to] do things like voter registration, naturalization, and getting people to vote, you know, making people understand the importance of voting."

"I think Latinos have to get more involved in community organizations just so people can get to know them and recognize them as neighbors."

"We want more community participation because you don't have to be a citizen to join our PTOs (parent-teacher organizations) and to be involved in our issues..."

"People are moving in there, they need to speak out. If you don't have the activists, you don't have the community. If you don't have the community, you don't create a path for the activists..."

"Right here there are no civic organizations...clubs or organizations that represent the community in a civic way."

"...have some way of developing leaders or developing community residents so that they feel comfortable in taking an active role."

What Should Be Done? Suggestions from Interviewees

Berwyn

- We need to help people become citizens.
- We need representation in government offices.
- We need education on the importance of voting.
- We need to get people registered.
- Get people to see how the political system works and why.
- [Political] turnover is the only solution.
- Raise people's sights and raise their demands.
- We need a nonprofit group to get people to become citizens and get them registered to vote.
- Empower people through community.
- Organize.
- We need dialogues.
- We need leadership training.

Cicero

- We need citizenship.
- We need voter registration and mobilization.
- Solve the political participation problem through naturalization and voter registration drives.
- We need community-based candidates.
- Prosecute corrupt officials.
- Residents need to participate more in the political process.
- Latinos need to start running for office.
- Bring in strong political leaders from the Latino community.
- Promote trust and eliminate the atmosphere of fear and disenfranchisement.
- Involve the community through youth programs.
- Establish a community-based organization.
- We need leadership training.

Law Enforcement, Crime and Violence

Findings:

- Many Latino community members distrust the Cicero Police Department, which has been subject to many allegations of corruption.
- The Berwyn Police Department is not viewed with as much suspicion, but it is considered to be unresponsive to Latinos in certain ways; there are few Latino or Spanish-speaking police officers.
- Street-gang violence and domestic violence are two crime issues highlighted by persons interviewed for this report.
- Several study participants cited the issue of criminalizing those who drive without a driver's license due to their immigration status.

The Town of Cicero has a notorious reputation with respect to policing and crime. Many persons interviewed for this report alleged that the Cicero police department is rife with corruption, and Latino interviewees expressed distrust of police officers.

"They need to have noncorrupt, well-trained, honest, bilingual police officers. [Cicero police are] sort of the instrument of harassment against the community rather than genuinely trying to be a law enforcement presence that assists the community."

"In Cicero, the police can break your budget. If you leave a car...thirty seconds after twelve o'clock on a cleaning day, they pick up your car; and it used to be $250, now it's $500...The registered voters are not picked up."

Berwyn, in contrast to Cicero, has not developed a reputation as having widespread corruption within its ranks. Some interviewees claimed, however, that Berwyn is behind Cicero in terms of hiring Latino patrolmen and supervisors and in understanding the Latino community.

"I don't know that they [Berwyn police] have training as it relates to Latinos but I think that would be of benefit, because there might be a sense that they should stop everybody that, you know, has a brown face, for example."

"There are moderate issues of trust…I know that racial profiling has been a problem."

"I think that you need more Hispanic officers out there, who presumably know a little more about Hispanic issues and also have Spanish language capability."

There were also instances of police who do a commendable job of engaging youth in the community:

"Law enforcement officers—I know a few that I work with on an everyday basis that are very good and they take the time from their own personal time to help some of our students get out of different situations and they have developed some programs also that help the students become better people. They run into situations with gangs or they want to get out of a gang, they will take that kid by the hand and help him along to get out of the gang."

Two areas of criminal activity that were raised by many persons in our focus groups and interviews were street-gang violence and domestic violence.

"A lot of people [have been] coming from neighborhoods where gangs are a big problem and bringing the gang problems to the neighborhoods. Specifically in the case of Cicero, Betty Loren-Maltese, the actual president, has been having a very hard strong arm against gangs over there."

"Well, I'm so reluctant to raise the gang crime issue because I think that's been used against Latinos…but certainly, there has been an increase in gang violence…"

"It's a lawless community in many ways. Huge turnovers in the police department, in the leadership of the police department. It's been a mobbed up place for years and years, so there is a kind of Wild West sensibility about the place."

"People who are part of the political system get a much higher level of public safety response."

"But the biggest issue is corruption on the police force and the blatant profiling and harassment of residents."

"I remember a Latino mother telling me that she has a teenage daughter, an honor-roll student at the high school and she was concerned about her staying out at night, and her concern was less to do with being hassled by the gang members but rather being caught by the police and the fine that would entail."

"You will get the police stopping somebody for tinted windows, again they are applying the letter of the law by, you know, the law says you can't have tinted windows in the front area of the car, but then, they tow the car and it costs a resident $1,500 to have the car taken out of the tow, and the only infraction is literally, just tinted windows. Yeah, so when you look at the demographics of the population, which is a lower economic base, coming up with $1,500 is very difficult."

"Berwyn has a better police department than Cicero. Cicero is a politicized department that needs to be professionalized and there should be in both departments a greater representation among the Hispanics."

"A lot of times, they [Latino drivers] may be illegal, and so they...drive without drivers' licenses, which causes them to get into the legal system because they get pulled over."

What Should Be Done? Suggestions from Interviewees

Berwyn

- Offer more opportunities for the kids to be active in sports or other activities.
- Recruit bilingual officers.
- Train police to increase their understanding of the Latino community.

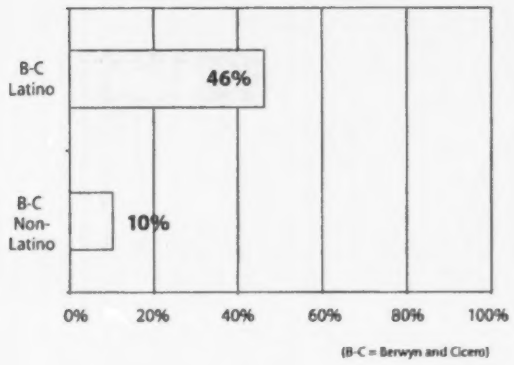
Cicero

- We need better parenting [to reduce crime].
- We need more communication, more understanding between the police and community.

- Overhaul the way the police department functions.
- Recruit bilingual officers.
- Recruit and train officers who will not harbor discrimination against Latinos.
- Ensure that law enforcement is fair and even-handed and not politicized.
- Change the town leadership.
- We need alternatives to keep kids out of gangs.
- Help immigrants get drivers licenses.

Health

Percentage of Population with no Health Insurance
MCIC Metro Survey 1996–2000



Findings:

- About 46 percent of the Berwyn-Cicero Latino population lacks health insurance, compared to only 10 percent of non-Latinos in the area.
- There is a shortage of bilingual and bicultural medical professionals in the area.
- There appear to be inadequate services for disabled children.
- Many young Latinas are having children while still in high school.
- There is a high incidence of certain diseases and health issues in the Latino community: these include diabetes, obesity, hypertension, heart disease, and tuberculosis.

"Access. Access. Access. Having fluent bilingual, bicultural health care givers; having institutions that are bilingual and bicultural. Fluent health givers at all levels. Board members, CEOs."

The well-being of the Latino community is closely enjoined with access to health care. Mental and physical health allows working-age adults to participate in the labor force to their fullest potential, it permits children to engage in their schooling, and it helps the elderly live with dignity.[22]

Unfortunately, one of the most distinguishing socioeconomic characteristics of Latinos in the United States, including Berwyn and Cicero, is the low percentage of persons with health insurance. Only 54 percent of Latinos in the Berwyn-Cicero area have health insurance, compared to 90 percent of the non-Latino population. For uninsured

families medical crises can drain away income and limit the family's economic progress.

The most common source of health insurance in the United States is employer-sponsored insurance plans. Many Latinos, however, don't get health insurance from their jobs, since they often work in the service sector or in smaller manufacturing industries where employer-sponsored insurance isn't offered or requires expensive copayments.

Medicaid is a state and federal health insurance program, administered by the Illinois Department of Public Aid, for low-income persons. The rules for Medicaid eligibility are complex and vary according to whether or not a person receives welfare through programs such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and by the age of an individual. Even though a person lives in poverty, he or she may still be ineligible for regular Medicaid.

Latinos are low users of Medicaid: 35 percent of Latinos in poverty receive Medicaid statewide compared to 43 percent of Whites and 60 percent of African Americans.[23] Latino use of Medicaid is low for a variety of reasons. Some Latinos (particularly those who do not speak English and/or are immigrants) may not use Medicaid because they simply do not know that they are eligible. Others may be reluctant to use a welfare program on principle, that is, their cultural mores predispose them to avoid getting help from the government. Many Latino immigrants do not enroll because of complex policies—in particular, the 'public charge' doctrine[24]—governing the use of public assistance programs by immigrants.

"I have to say that most of the kids that have just come from Mexico...are not sexually active. But the longer they stay here, they sort of pick up the stuff that is happening...and a lot of the girls are really proud to be having babies..."

KidCare is a Medicaid-like health insurance program providing insurance to children whose families have incomes in the range of 133–200 percent of poverty.[25] KidCare is funded through a combination of state and federal dollars, and is administered by the Illinois Department of Public Aid.

Thousands of Illinois children, native and foreign born, have failed to sign up for KidCare. But the problem is acute with noncitizen children. Social service providers blame low immigrant KidCare enrollment on the 'public charge' fear described earlier, and on lack of public awareness of the program.

MacNeal Hospital Interpreter Services

Failure to comply with Title VI regulations of the Office of Civil Rights of the US Department of Health and Human Services is widespread, but MacNeal Hospital is an honorable exception. It is one of only a handful of hospitals in the Chicago area to offer interpreter services on a 24-hour basis. Fully one quarter of its staff are bilingual; when bilingual or bicultural staff are not available, patients can call on three full-time and a number of part-time interpreters for Spanish, Polish, Russian, sign language, and any other language necessary.

Perhaps most importantly, many Latinos are simply ineligible for Medicaid and/or KidCare. Undocumented immigrants cannot receive Medicaid except in emergency situations and in the case of pregnant women who can receive pre- and postpartum medical care.[26] All legal immigrants arriving since the passage of welfare reform—22 August 1996—are ineligible for regular Medicaid.

All persons in the US regardless of their health insurance coverage or immigration status are eligible for emergency treatment reimbursable by Medicaid. But many illnesses are not considered 'emergencies' and cannot be treated at the emergency room. Also, while emergency room treatment may stabilize a serious illness such as pneumonia, patients will be sent home shortly after the illness is no longer life-threatening, and they must pay for follow-up care, including prescription drugs, if they cannot find a free clinic.

Some Latinos have difficulty accessing the health care system because they cannot communicate with the health care provider. Some Latinos do not speak English well and cannot locate medical professionals who speak their language.

Medical institutions, in turn, often fail to provide adequate interpretation and translation services. A recent report on suburban immigrants found claims by immigrants that interpretation in hospitals was sometimes done by a child of a patient, by a family member, or by an untrained hospital employee.[27] In the case of children, the child may not fully understand the topic, or the child's participation may cause the parent shame and embarrassment. Family members have been inappropriately asked to interpret in situations where a medical professional was attempting to assist a person suffering from a sensitive mental illness such as depression.

The medical institutions often find it difficult to provide adequate translation and interpretation services. Hospital staff encounter difficulties in finding bilingual personnel with professional credentials in social work, counseling, and other areas. There are reportedly no training programs at suburban community colleges, for example, that certify bilingual specialists in areas such as substance-abuse counseling.

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Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that institutions such as hospitals that receive federal assistance, must make appropriate efforts to provide interpretation and translation services. Failure to do this may constitute national-origin discrimination. Complaints about lack of adequate language services may be filed with the Office of Civil Rights of the US Department of Health and Human Services, which has authority to investigate and fine institutions that fail to provide language assistance. Yet it appears that violations of Title VI are widespread and usually go unreported.

While it is beyond the scope of this report to describe the epidemiological features of Latino health, it is safe to say that several health concerns are raised more frequently than others by interviewees. Diabetes is a frequent problem among Latinos, affected by diet, lifestyle, and lack of intervention. Tuberculosis is a problem because it is more prevalent in Mexico than in the US, and some immigrants have been exposed to the disease. Immunizations in general can be a challenge because of the lack of health insurance. There are sites sponsored by the Cook County Health Department and others where parents can get free immunizations for their children, but some parents do not avail themselves of these free vaccinations.

"We need to have doctors who are both culturally and medically proficient, who are able to give quality medicine, and to have physicians who have a history of people, so people don't just seek health care just when it's an emergent situation but rather are part of a comprehensive approach to good health and well-being."

"I think one of the major issues will be the growing number of diabetic patients that we are going to be seeing. And as it is we already have a lot of diabetics, undiagnosed diabetics in the community, but we do have a lot of students here who are really set-ups for diabetes. We have a very large number of obese kids, over-weight kids, and what we have noticed too, is that the classic story, the kids that come from Mexico within six months to a year of living here they have all gained weight. And that is the biggest risk factor for developing diabetes..."

"There is a rising TB rate in Cicero that we attribute directly to the people coming from rural Mexico or other rural areas. We are trying to stem that as best we can and get the kids TB inoculations and chest X-rays. Standard immunization is a concern. We are between a rock and a hard place... Some children may not have had any immunizations in Mexico. Now [they] want to enroll in school. We won't accept you; we want you to be here, but without the immunizations we cannot risk... We have children with TB who should be in school but we cannot let them in until they get their medication. If their parents are new to this country or illegal they are afraid to contact people, they do not know where to go and the kid does not get services."

"I have many issues with agencies that provide services to the disability community but they don't provide services to the Latino community. They send them somewhere else. And so the Latino does not get access to the quality of services from the other agencies."

What Should Be Done? Suggestions from Interviewees

Berwyn

- We have to educate. We have to understand the health problems that are unique to the Hispanic culture/population.
- Top priority is having Latino health care providers.
- We need health care for children, health care for families that are not insured.
- Find ways to serve the disabled.

Cicero

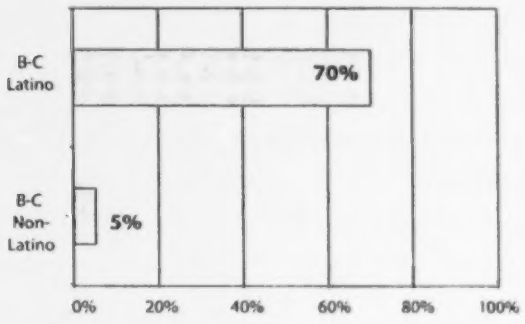
- Organize people to address issues.
- Health care providers need to be culturally sensitive.
- For kids, do a depression inventory, a substance-abuse inventory.
- Teach nutrition.
- Give kids dental care.
- Broaden health services to do more prevention.
- We need public education on health care.
- We need education programs that deal with teenage pregnancy.

Immigration

Findings:

- Immigration law and policy are highly complex and constantly changing. Many immigrants have need for legal assistance and other kinds of information to understand their rights and responsibilities under the law.
- Many immigrants, and the general society, would benefit from naturalization assistance to help eligible immigrants become US citizens.

Percentage of Population Born Outside the US
MCIC Metro Survey 1996–2000



B-C = Berwyn and Cicero

As discussed earlier in this report (under "Latino Social and Economic Status"), approximately 42,000 foreign-born Latinos live in the Berwyn-Cicero area. The local population may include at least 12,000 undocumented Mexican immigrants.

Berwyn and Cicero have a long tradition of being home to immigrants. Many of the new Berwyn and Cicero residents who moved to the area during the population boom of the early 1900s were European immigrants from the Austro-Hungarian Empire (Bohemians and Slovaks), Poland, and Italy. Older residents of the area recall a time when Czech and other languages were commonly used in the stores along Cermak Road and when older immigrant women pulling their wheeled shopping baskets along the street was a common sight. These immigrants founded many of the businesses and institutions in the area. A Czech immigrant, William Kaspar, founded the First National Bank of Cicero in 1920, while Czechs also created the network of physical fitness and community centers, the Sokols, that were formerly found in Cicero, Berwyn, Stickney, and Brookfield.[28]

Today's Berwyn and Cicero immigrants, of course, primarily come from Mexico, as has been described earlier in this report. In recent decades US policies and laws regarding immigration have been in substantial flux, at times facilitating and at other times restricting the ability of the foreign born to gain legal residence. Governmental policies and immigrant attitudes toward naturalization have also evolved profoundly. As a result of these complicated shifts, many immigrants are confused about their status under the law and their opportunities to acquire either permanent residence or US citizenship. For the undocumented particular issues exist

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in regard to their inability to get a driver's license, attend college, and otherwise survive in this society.

"[For immigrants] depending on their legal status, there's going to be issues of access to programs and also their own comfort level with getting programs. Like, for example, if they wanted to go enroll their son in a park district program, that might not be a problem... If they need legal assistance, where would they go to? I don't know what is the one agency that you can go to and say, 'OK, I need assistance. I'm in the process of naturalization. I'm in transition. I'm between/I'm becoming an LPR'. Where would you go?"

"[Immigration is of] huge importance to the people. Getting people who can be legalized, teaching people how it is you get your family members and having a short-term plan and a long-term plan, understanding that immigration... is still the key to family unification."

"Immigration is a tremendous issue. If you have got only 25,000 registered voters, why are the other 45,000 not? Either they are not citizens, they are not legal, or they are children."

"Our immigration issues are really key in Cicero, because when you're looking at human services programs you are talking about immigrants and refugees...in particular the Mexican community."

What Should Be Done? Suggestions from Interviewees

Berwyn

- Teach people what their rights are in this country.
- Help people naturalize.
- Give immigration seminars, workshops.

Cicero

- Inform people about their alternatives.
- Do something for undocumented kids who are stuck here as second-class citizens.
- Give informational seminars for residents.

Housing

Findings:

- Many Latinos in Cicero, and to a lesser extent in Berwyn, perceive local housing policies as discriminatory. Cicero has actively instituted public policy that is widely perceived as discriminatory in nature and has required intervention by the US Justice Department. The enforcement of housing ordinances and inspections is said to be tied to political donations.
- Many non-Latinos in Cicero, and to a lesser extent Berwyn, criticize Latino households for being too large, and for having too many cars; they criticize Latinos for not taking care of their homes.

Housing is an issue over which there is a significant divide among residents of the Berwyn and Cicero areas. Generally speaking, the White population places a strong value on low population density, having few cars on the streets, a certain esthetic involving carefully managed lawns and neat appearance, and prohibitions on the subdivision of housing units or buildings into extra units. While the Latino population shares many of these values—as witnessed by the carefully tended homes of many Latino homeowners—the Latino reality is that extended families are common, moderate and low incomes force relatives to share housing space, and the relative youth of the population and their employment in areas with no public transportation mean that a typical household has more cars than that of an elderly White household.

Latino households are larger than non-Latino households in Berwyn and Cicero. In 1990 the average Latino household in Berwyn had 3.6 persons compared to 2.3 for non-Latinos. In Cicero the average was 4.4 for Latinos and 2.5 for non-Latinos.

The governments of Berwyn and Cicero have enacted a variety of housing ordinances designed to control population density, parking of cars, subdivision of units and buildings, and maintenance conditions. In the 1990s Cicero attempted to implement an ordinance limiting the

number of persons per square foot in a housing unit. The US Justice Department sued the town and the ordinance was rescinded. Cicero has also passed an ordinance that makes certain basement and attic apartments illegal; the ordinance is applicable retroactively, meaning that housing units that were once legal have become illegal. Even the town's strict enforcement of parking regulations is intertwined with the nature of Latino households and housing. Latino households are relatively large and thus tend to have more automobiles that need to be parked somewhere. Many members of the Latino population whom we interviewed see these ordinances as a reflection of antipathy and hostility toward Latinos.

"Cicero has a very conservative view of what constitutes too many people in a housing unit, and that of course bumps up against Mexican notions of the traditional extended family that may live together."

"Housing is a real problem for us. The problem comes in when we have two families living in a single family home or two families living in a two-flat, and/or families that have other family members move in—more distant family members move in and they start renting out rooms in the basement."

"[There can be a] huge family that is subdividing a house. And when you have the grandparents living upstairs and then the parents and then kids are down in the basement, it's like hey, you know what? They are all together. But it violates Berwyn's zoning laws of how you can have like an apartment within your home. They are showing a good family element where in today's society that is not always the case."

"There is a requirement that before you can sell your house, a town official has to come out and inspect the house. And you hear horror stories. He will walk through with a pencil and push in at the window frame and say you have to replace all of the window frames. He will go up on the roof and take a look. Now unless you either participate in some kind of fund-raising thing, where your name is listed on that list, people that have made a contribution or unless you know somebody, they can make it very difficult to sell your house."

"The political corruption in Cicero…So for example, if you would buy tickets to political fund-raising events, you would get a pass on building code violations, whereas if you weren't prepared to bribe people in that way, they would subject you to extreme housing code enforcement."

"Prior to March of 98, let's assume you are a Latino. You bought a two-flat with an in-law basement apartment. The apartment has been there with its bathroom, its kitchen, bedroom, and living room, whatever. You bought this from a non-Latino family. There was a certificate of compliance issued by the town of Cicero indicating that that apartment or that building had been inspected and it complied with all of the code enforcement laws and they issued a certificate of compliance in order for the sale to go through from a non-Latino to a Latino family. Then what happens in March of '98, they decided there were too many Latinos moving in to the town of Cicero. We have to control the borders. Well one of the ways that they did it was quite simply pass an ordinance making all basement in-law apartments illegal. Even though they had previously issued certificates of compliance. Now the only exception is if you can show that that apartment existed prior to July 1997. Now coincidentally, you go to the Town Assessor's office and they don't have those records. And coincidentally you go to the Cook County Assessor's office and they destroyed the records because, as one of my law clerks was told, you must be from Cicero. How would you know we are asking about Cicero? Well, Cicero is the only one that are still doing this and we decided we did not want to deal with Cicero's problems so we destroyed those records too. So it is virtually impossible to get proof that that apartment existed prior to July 1997. Now what has the town done? What it has done, it has issued a ticket in violation for this basement apartment that cost you about $1,000. You have to go in now and you have to tear everything out of the basement and leave four walls. Tear out the restrooms, kitchens, all of the walls, and you can't rent it. What does that do to us Latinos? One, it limits the number of families that live in that building. So from three families you go to two. They control population. Also, if you relied on that extra apartment for income, to pay your mortgage, you don't have it any longer. This was brought out several times during the election season. I was in court one time on a similar case when a gentleman in front of me went up and said, "But I have a Certificate of Compliance. I bought this building three years ago."

And the code enforcement officer bluntly said in front of the judge, "Tough. The laws change." Just like that. And the judge all he could do was say: This is what the law says. We had to file an application for noncompliance before the zoning board. Who controls the zoning board? The administration. What do they say? Sorry it does not comply. Application denied. This happens not only to non-Latinos but to Latinos now. Okay they just happened to do this to this lady because I happened to be representing her. For her to argue this case any further she has got to file a lawsuit in circuit court that is going to cost her time and money. She had a good case. We had the records to prove it. We actually had the records from the Assessor's office in Cook County that they had given us before they said they were destroying these things and we had them showing that that apartment existed prior to 1997. Even with that proof, they denied it. The client decided, you know what, I am not going to fight it because it is going to cost me $10,000–$20,000 down the road. What Latino family can put up $10,000–$20,000?"

What Should Be Done? Suggestions from Interviewees

Berwyn

- We need help with the code enforcement.
- Educate community members on the code.

Cicero

- Clean up corruption in Cicero Building Department.
- Change ordinances so that they do not require families to tear down existing in-law apartments.

Social and Human Services

Findings:

- Social service providers indicated that the demand for service is greater than current capacity to provide them.
- There are insufficient youth-related services in Berwyn and Cicero.
- There is a need for community resource centers and resource guides that provide information on basic health, social, human and immigration services.
- Social service providers indicated that some services are not available in Spanish and that there is a need for more bilingual and bicultural staff.

"One of our biggest problems is that we don't have enough qualified Spanish-speaking people in areas that we need them in. We have a ton of Spanish-speaking people but not necessarily certified by the state to be principals, assistant principals, superintendents, and social workers, psychologists, those kind of roles."

An idea of what kind of social and human service organizations that could benefit the Berwyn and Cicero Latino community but that are in short supply in the area can be gained from looking at Latino neighborhoods in Chicago. Within the City of Chicago, where Latino and other ethnic communities have been established for decades, one can find groups that offer food assistance, instruction in English, occupational training, immigrant legal aid, shelters for battered women, and other services.

These types of services are likely to be beneficial to the Latino community in Berwyn and Cicero. The task for philanthropic and other groups will include identifying potential providers. Some organizations established in Chicago have expressed interest in opening branches in Berwyn and Cicero, and some already have. Local leaders in the Berwyn-Cicero area may be interested in creating new organizations from the ground up.

The need to provide such services by bilingual and bicultural personnel is critical. Designing programs that are culturally competent and consider the human needs of individuals as well as the issues of adaptation to a new country are essential to relieving the stress that many families experience.

Social service providers all spoke of the need to provide services that are comprehensive, holistic, coordinated, and integrated. They suggested the need for community resource centers as vehicles to enable immigrants to obtain resources such as immigration

services and as a way to ensure that they are informed about what is happening in the community.

"I think it's very difficult for somebody who really doesn't have the English skills to try to communicate with a caregiver and feel connected, feel like they're getting what they need."

"We need some kind of a resource center in the community with all this information, where parents can just go in, get the help that they need. I don't think there are too many places like that."

"We see the kids that are growing up who don't have any place to play. They're not allowed to have basketball nets in the alleys anymore."

"There is a breakdown somewhere in 5th, 6th, 7th grade. We see moms walking kids to school in 5th and 6th grade and then all of a sudden... These people come from rural Mexico, I don't think they know how to deal with their kids in these situations. They are overwhelmed. Antigang programs, prevention...parental awareness programs, not so much awareness, but what can parents do?"

"Our immigration issues are really key in Cicero, because when you're looking at human services programs you are talking about immigrants and refugees... in particular the Mexican community."

"One of the things that I've been concerned about is where old Latinos go. The answer that I've always gotten back is: Well, their family takes care of them. But I'm not convinced that that's the case. I hang out with a lot of developmentally disabled groups and I see very few Latinos and I don't know what they do. I assume they have as many as the rest of us."

What Should Be Done? Suggestions from Interviewees

Berwyn

- Training for social services agencies is a very high priority.
- Use education to reduce teen pregnancy.

- We need to assess what are the deficits in services.
- We need a center for information on community support services.
- We need more youth services.
- Hire more bilingual and bicultural staff.
- Provide services for victims of domestic violence.

Cicero

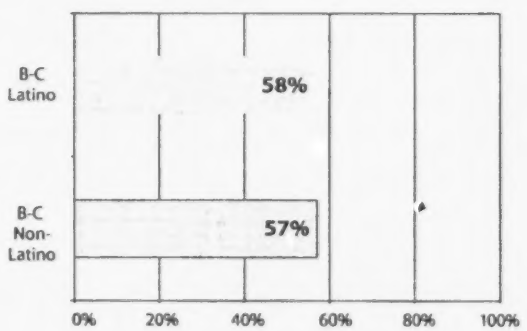
- Use Tax Increment Funds for social services for families.
- We need partnership between the community and the school.
- We need an overall plan.
- We need more youth services.
- Hire more bilingual and bicultural staff.

Employment/Occupation

Findings:

- The position of Latinos in the labor market is precarious, and this is exacerbated by the presence of undocumented workers who are particularly subject to exploitation.
- Today's economy places a premium on education, a situation that has important implications for a low-skilled labor force and its needs for training.
- There is a need for more Latino professionals such as physicians, nurses, social workers, and teachers.

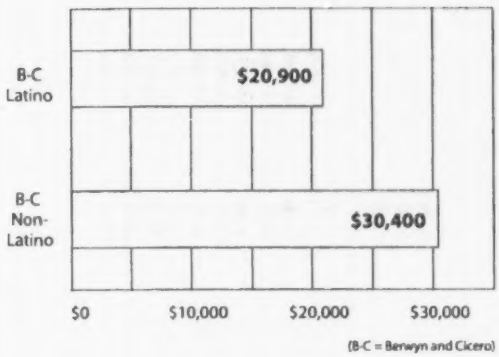
Employed
MCIC Metro Survey 1996–2000



(These percentages are based on total survey respondents aged 18 or over, not the total economically active population. B-C = Berwyn and Cicero.)

Latinos have a high labor-force participation rate. This means that, relative to other groups, a greater percentage of the Latino population aged 16 or over (i.e., working age) are either employed or are actively seeking employment. In the 1997–2000 period in Illinois 70.6 percent of Latinos were in the labor force compared to 68.8 percent of White non-Latinos and 62.6 percent of African Americans.

Median Household Income
MCIC Metro Survey 1996–2000



The types of jobs held by Latino workers differ from those generally held by Whites or African Americans. Some 34.1 percent of Illinois Latino workers were in operator, fabricator, laborer occupations or in service occupations in 1997–2000, compared to 13.9 percent of Whites and 18.2 percent of Blacks. About 17.9 percent of Latino workers were in service occupations compared to 11.5 percent of Whites and 19.2 percent of Blacks.

The economic opportunities that were presented to working-class groups in previous eras may not be available today. During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries manufacturing and other industrial sectors offered a range of occupations that varied in terms of the skills required of workers. Formal education was relatively less important than the ability to learn on the job. This kind of industrial organization permitted workers to 'move up the ladder' as their skills improved. Today, economists often describe the US economy as having acquired a 'dual' or 'two-tiered' structure, in which workers on the bottom rungs have fewer chances of entering higher-level jobs. In other words, bridging the gap between low-paying and high-paying employment is more difficult for the average low-skilled worker today than it was in the past. It has often been noted that this restructuring of the US job market has occurred just as Latino workers have entered the labor force in large numbers, in the last few decades.

"They need to have more programs for the teens besides what they are doing in school. Definitely more job training for the teens and show them more than working in the restaurant..."

While fewer mid-level jobs exist in today's economy, there are still opportunities for workers who acquire the right training and education. Jobs in the building trades offer good wages and benefits, though the various unions in the Chicago area covering carpenters, electricians, etc. require a high school diploma as a prerequisite to obtaining an apprenticeship. Persons already employed with a manufacturer could move up the line if they acquired extra math or English skills.

Latino workers encounter some other barriers to advancement in the labor force. Obviously, the relatively low level of education of Latino adults hinders labor force mobility. Other impediments exist as well. In 1986 the federal government instituted 'employer sanctions' that require employers to verify that job applicants have correct documents proving that they can legally work in the US. By 1991 the US General Accounting

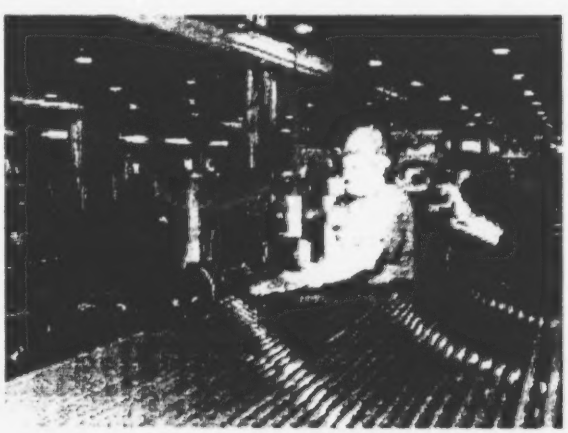
Office found 'widespread' discrimination against job seekers who look 'foreign', and many observers laid the blame for this discrimination on employer sanctions. Indeed, the Justice Department has successfully sued numerous employers nationwide for demanding too many documents from or refusing to hire persons who look foreign born, out of fear of being penalized by the INS for hiring an undocumented alien.

For undocumented workers, of course, it is especially difficult to find higher-paying jobs. Many undocumented workers use falsified social security numbers and other documents to obtain their job. The system of employer sanctions means that they may be reluctant to switch jobs during their career given that each new hiring process requires the illegal use of documents. This fact can cause a worker to remain in a job where working conditions are harsh or where the worker's skills are undervalued.

In the past few decades in the Chicago area a new type of employer has sprung up in numerous Latino communities: 'day labor' agencies that connect workers for short stints of a few days or a few weeks with an employer that has a temporary need for extra workers. Many charges have been leveled at the day labor agencies. Some agencies are said to mislead workers about the amount of transportation fees they will be assessed (the agency transports the workers to their place of employment and takes a charge out of their paycheck). While the agencies fill a necessary niche in the labor force for temporary labor, they fail to create steady employment with significant benefits for the persons they employ.

Notwithstanding the above, Latino workers can 'make it' in the US economy. The tidy, single-family homes owned by many Latino families in Berwyn and Cicero are a testament to the success achieved by many workers. Many of the family-owned businesses on Cermak Road and other avenues provide a good salary to their entrepreneurial owners. Also, as time goes on, more and more Latinos with higher education are entering the job market and the Latino middle and upper classes are growing in number. .

"I would say more training programs for our community. I would like to see more of that and in particular, even for our youth, like vocational programs. We have a very young group of kids coming out of the educational system, we do have a high drop out rate, and we need to somehow address: where are these kids going to be in the system?"



"If their English is not good and if their technological skills are not good, in today's business environment they are not going to be able to get a good job. Therefore, it follows that the kind of jobs that would be available [to Latinos] would be janitorial, maybe food service."

"Many of the Latinos that are in this community are hard-working blue-collar people; they are not college-educated personnel. If this were 30 years ago, they would have found jobs...But industry is not here anymore. Western Electric used to be here—it was huge."

"There is a high standard of living. So many of these people work two and three jobs; two or three eight-hour shifts to get $16/hour. They are gone a lot from home. We have a lot of latch-key kids and no social services here. So you have kids coming home, in many cases, with no one home to encourage them to do their homework. By the time moms and dads come home, they are tired. It is a difficult way of life."

What Should Be Done? Suggestions from Interviewees

Berwyn

- Provide job-readiness type of education.
- Provide more English classes for adults.
- Provide better access to education.

Cicero

- Provide training.
- Get knowledge out about where the jobs are.
- Help Latinos acquire the skills to make them more employable.

Local Businesses

Findings:

- Growth of Latino-owned businesses is revitalizing local business districts and helping to keep others strong in Berwyn and Cicero.
- Latino entrepreneurs would likely benefit from technical assistance and increased access to capital.
- Long-established business associations appear to be having problems in attracting Latino members.
- The Town of Cicero is perceived to be taking advantage of business owners, especially Latinos, through corruption and demands for bribes.

The state of business and economic development in Berwyn and Cicero is in some ways identical to the situation faced by thousands of small communities across the United States. Whereas the early and middle decades of the twentieth century were a time when manufacturing thrived and offered large-scale employment and large tax payments, the economic scene in communities like Berwyn and Cicero today is one in which few large-scale manufacturers remain and the business community is more dominated by smaller retailers and service providers. Indeed, the future of business development in Berwyn and Cicero most likely lies in its ability to promote these smaller service sector establishments.

"There is a sense that businesses have to play with the political system in order to get what they need. There is a limited element of fear. There may be some community business apprehension or prejudice about Latino businesses in the community."

Berwyn and Cicero actually face some positive opportunities in the area of business development. The Latino community has a high rate of entrepreneurship and many Latinos see owning their own business as the best way to earn a middle-class income. To the east of Cicero, along 26th Street in Chicago, one can see an extraordinary degree of small-business development. It can be a challenge to merely drive down 26th Street on a Saturday morning as it is so congested with shoppers. It has often been claimed that the 26th Street area is the second largest source of retail tax revenues for the city of Chicago, second only to Michigan Avenue.

The growth of Latino-owned and Latino-patronized businesses in Berwyn and Cicero is clearly evident along Cermak Road. Whereas by the 1970s and 1980s Cermak Road was losing vitality, with stores closing, today Cermak Road is regaining its former vitality. The Latino businesses

are more common as one moves eastward on Cermak, toward Cicero Avenue, but Latino establishments are found out to the west as far as Harlem.

Berwyn's situation is in some ways different from Cicero's. Retail business in Berwyn never suffered the same kind of decline as happened in Cicero, so the process of evolution in Berwyn may be best described as a gradual replacement of non-Latino businesses with Latino businesses. In Cicero, on the other hand, many businesses had closed outright (for example, in the '70s, '80s, and '90s, vacant lots developed north and south of Cermak between Laramie Avenue and 50th Avenue), and the succession of business ownership from White to Latino did not proceed as smoothly.

More than a few of the persons interviewed for this report noted that the established chambers of commerce in Berwyn and Cicero that were created by White business people have had a hard time recruiting Latino members. Some observers felt that Latinos did not feel comfortable with the existing chambers, while others thought that Latinos simply preferred to have their own chamber. It would seem that chambers of commerce would function better if their membership were integrated, yet there may not be an easy solution for this problem of, in effect, segregated chambers of commerce.

"One of the greatest changes was the lack of participation of the Latino business in community events. We have a business association that has been here for 75 years, which is now nonexistent because of the lack of participation... I tried to get all the new Hispanic businesses to join the organization... We were just told that they didn't want to belong to our association, that they wanted their own."

It may indeed be possible to encourage positive relations between Latino and non-Latino businesses. Programs designed to bring Latinos and non-Latinos together, as in so many other situations, can develop new relationships. Latino businesspersons may benefit from understanding the traditions, economic structures, personal relationships, political issues, etc. that govern the business community in Berwyn and Cicero, while non-Latino businesses could probably benefit from learning about the Latino consumer, Latino marketing strategies, and Latino ways of doing business by interacting with Latino entrepreneurs.

Given that many Latino businesspersons are new to the area and may have just begun their businesses, technical assistance to them from chambers and government agencies is important. Several interviewees made this point. Another need that the interviewees cited is commonly heard in discussions about business development, namely, that small businesses often suffer from a lack of access to capital. Access to capital in the form of loans may be something that could be improved through better relationships between businesspersons and the banking community.

Finally, as with other issues in Cicero, many interviewees felt that the town was politically corrupt and that businesses were the victims of this corruption. Interviewees claimed that sometimes it was necessary to make a donation to the Cicero Republican Party in order to get a license. They also claimed that town inspectors harassed Latino businesses.

"Question of corruption and sort of...and how if you want to do business in Cicero, you have to make political contributions...and if not, you're going to be harassed."

"When I moved in, I saw a lot of little store fronts closed up and it seemed like the neighborhood was kind of...dying down. Now I see whole mercados, bakeries all along from Cicero on all the way down to Harlem. So you do see a lot businesses opening up."

"It's the only area where you cannot put down [Latinos]. Entrepreneurship is something that immigrants come with, it's like in their genetic code."

"Local businesses are, Latinos are afraid to speak against or be in disagreement with the current administration of the Town of Cicero for the fear of loss of business license, liquor licenses, things of that sort of nature, so that if they don't cooperate with the Town of Cicero they know that their building and their business will be closed down."

"I think there needs to be organizations that are aggressively providing them small business development programs. Such as, probably the most important ones, access to capital, cash flow analysis and business plans which I feel that there isn't any organization right now in Berwyn or Cicero who is actively providing these resources."

What Should Be Done? Suggestions from Interviewees

Berwyn and Cicero

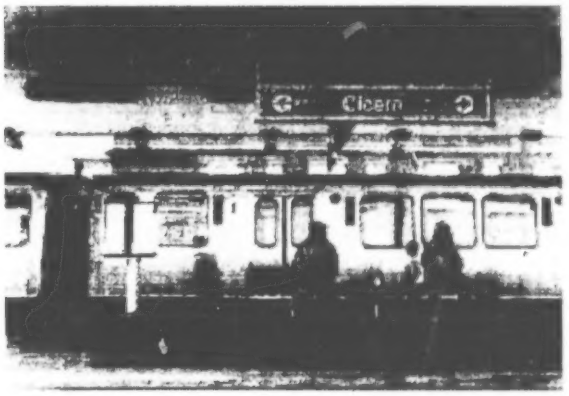
- Attract businesses that would employ low- to moderate-income workers.

- Give information on business management in Spanish.
- Help strengthen business associations.

Transportation

Findings:

- Heavy reliance on the automobile contributes to parking problems and makes Latinos susceptible to stringent parking regulations in Cicero.
- CTA service is not available on weekends.
- Insufficient public transportation causes some workers to drive even when they do not have a driver's license.



Transportation, be it public or private, is an important issue for workers and their families. The cost and efficiency of transportation can affect the type of job that a person is able to seek and hold, the ability of children to get to and from school and after-school programs, and the willingness of a shopper to travel to a retail establishment.

As is true with most groups and the communities in which they reside, most Latinos in Berwyn and Cicero actually work outside the community. For persons who work in Chicago the chances of being able to use public transportation are good, given the CTA Douglas Line which terminates at 54th Street in Cicero. That line, however, has had cutbacks in recent years and has reduced service on the weekends.

For workers who need to travel to other suburbs, little public transportation is available. Some individuals can use a Pace bus, but many persons necessarily have to rely on a private automobile. The need for cars can negatively affect the quality of life in a Berwyn or Cicero neighborhood in the eyes of some persons, as large quantities of cars can make streets crowded and parking places hard to find. Illegal parking in Cicero, as noted earlier, carries a high penalty including the risk of being expeditiously towed.

Many Latinos of Berwyn and Cicero who work near to each other in the suburbs will share rides in a carpool. For undocumented workers, driving carries the risk of being stopped by police and asked for identification that the driver cannot produce. In 2000 the Chief of the Traffic Court for Cook County supported an attempt to offer some kind of driver's license to undocumented immigrants, as Traffic Court judges began to tire of penalizing undocumented immigrants for the offense of no driver's license when so many more serious cases were on their dockets. The Illinois Secretary of State, Jesse White, at first supported the effort, but then backed down in the face of negative publicity generated by a Chicago Tribune story about the effort.

"Imagine taking a Pace bus. I mean how do you get to your job? How do you get to work? They get up at 5 o'clock in the morning...it's not unusual... I mean, who is on the street at 4 or 5 in the morning? It's the Mexicanos... cleaning the building and going home or going to work."

"We have a large number of people coming from one house. The cars flood out into the streets. There's no room in the garages. It's a real bothersome thing for the city, bothersome thing for the neighbors, it's a bothersome thing for the school district."

"I think that the transportation system in Cicero is pretty poor, too. I mean, I've tried to take buses and just given up because of the schedule. You have to take three to get somewhere that takes a half an hour to walk to."

"Their jobs are moving out to the western suburbs and there's not enough jobs for them. Not enough ways for them to get to the jobs. A lot of times, they may be illegal, and so they don't have drivers' licenses so they drive without drivers' licenses, which causes them to get into the legal system because they get pulled over."

What Should Be Done? Suggestions from Interviewees

Berwyn

- Improve access to local public transportation.

Cicero

- Find a way to ease the parking problem.
- Add CTA service.
- Help community residents obtain drivers licenses.
- Develop transportation alternatives for people who work in the suburbs.
- Reduce parking and towing fines.

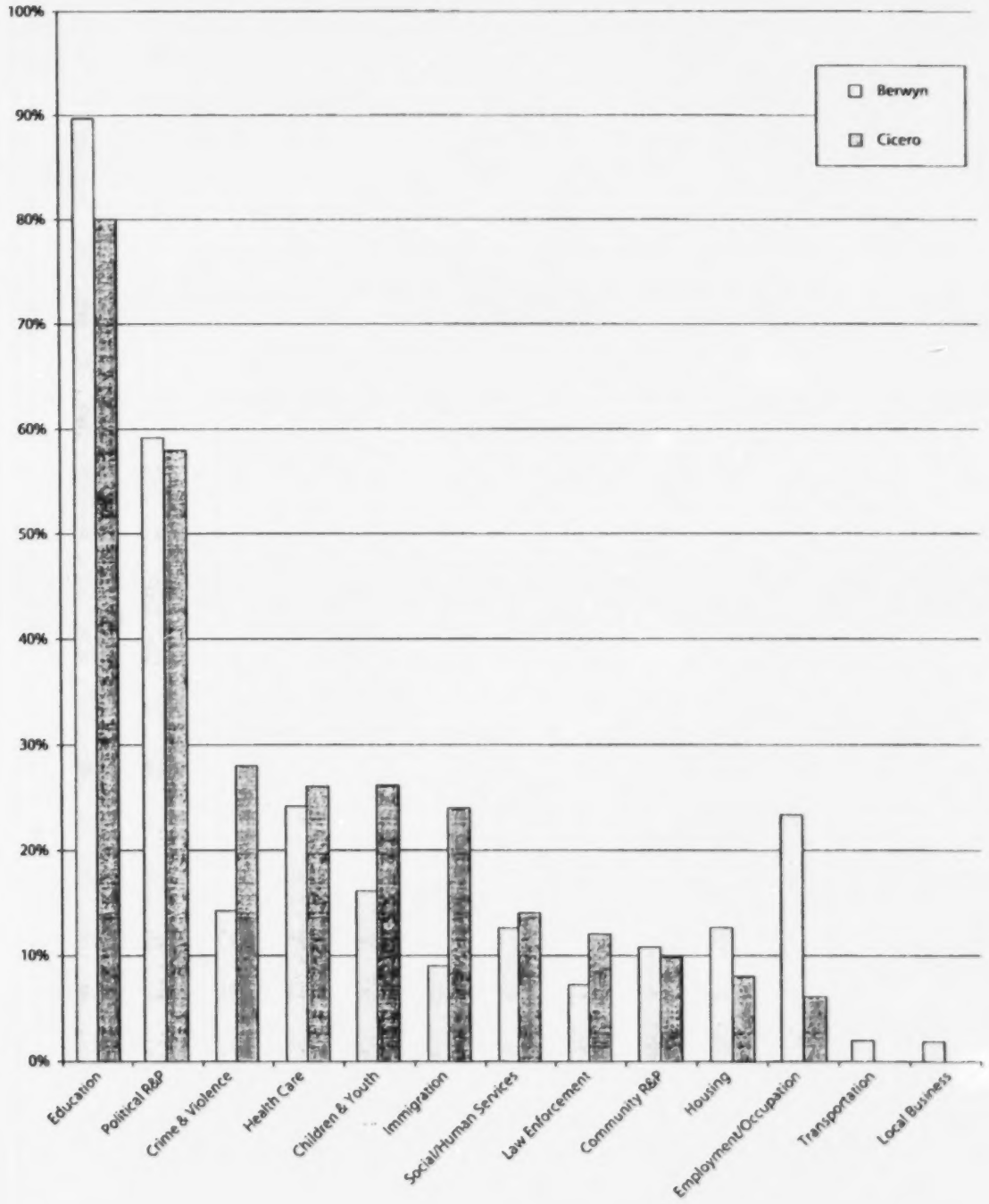
Discussion of Community Priorities

At the beginning of this section we discussed those issue areas that community respondents ranked as most important. Even with those rankings, however, community leaders and stakeholders will face difficult choices in setting funding priorities and therefore could benefit from further analysis of what respondents said was important. To that end, we present the following graphs that show which issues were ranked among the top three most important issues by respondents. This type of presentation serves to highlight those issues that were considered important by a wide range of individuals.

The first chart (opposite) shows that education was one of the top three issues for nearly 90 percent of Berwyn respondents and 80 percent of Cicero respondents. This is consistent with our earlier discussion of how respondents ranked the issues. We see that nearly the same percentage of both Berwyn and Cicero respondents, about 60 percent, describe political representation and participation as one of their top three issues. Significantly, no other issue was one of the top three issues for more than 30 percent of respondents in either Cicero or Berwyn.

Somewhat comparable findings are observed when respondents are divided into Latino and non-Latino categories (page 84). More than 80 percent of Latino and non-Latino respondents chose education as one of their three most important issues. Nearly four of five Latinos, however, chose political representation and participation as one of their top three issues, but less than half of non-Latinos made a similar choice. Among the remaining issues, only health care was chosen as one of the top three issues by at least 30 percent of respondents (in the case of non-Latinos).

Responses from Berwyn and Cicero Study Participants:
% of Respondents Ranking the Issue among the Top Three



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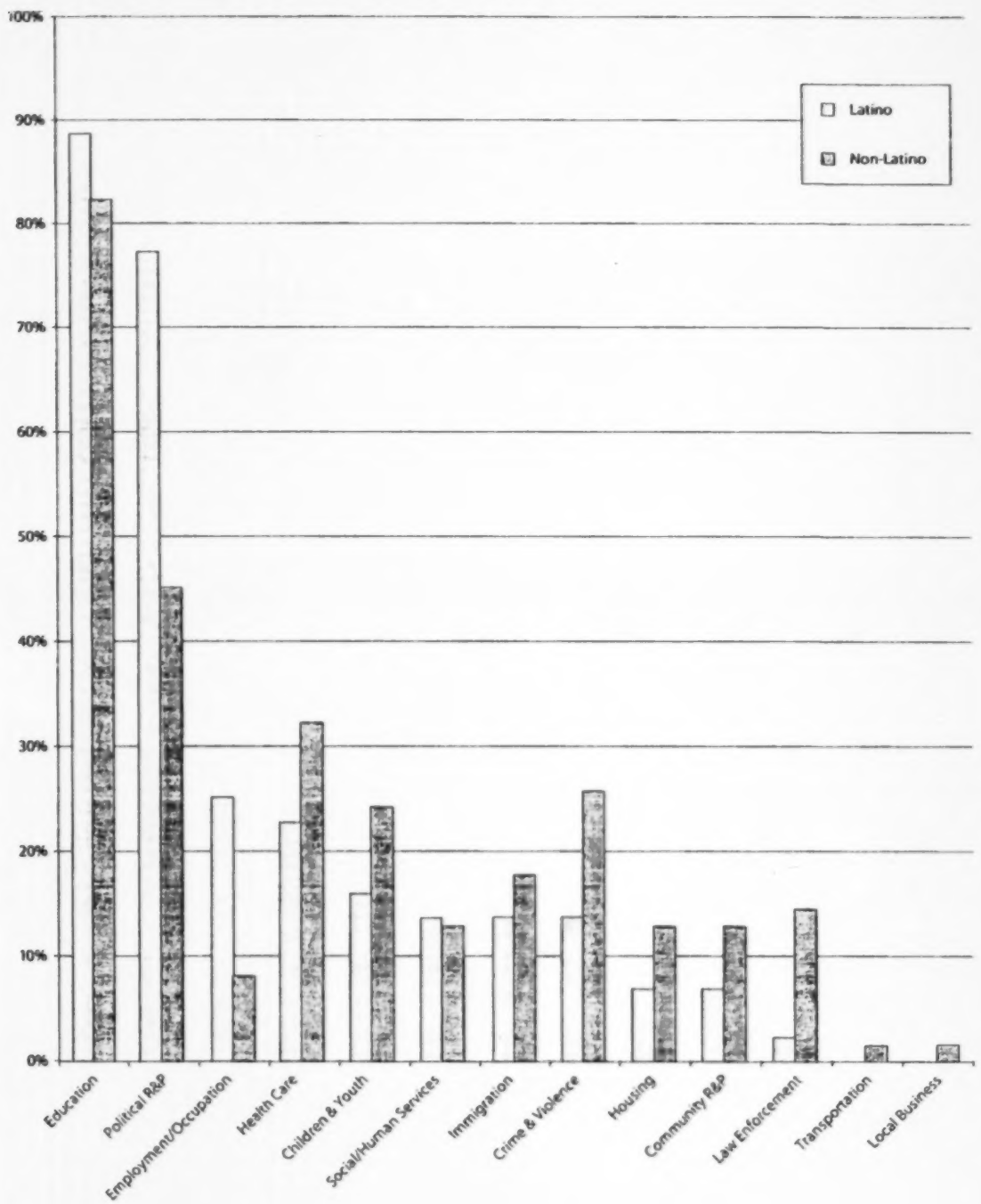
Responses from Latino and Non-Latino Study Participants:
% of Respondents Ranking the Issue among the Top Three



Conclusion

This report reflects findings from interviews with 172 persons knowledgeable about Berwyn and Cicero, analysis of social and economic data, and consideration of political, economic, social, and other contextual factors operating in the Berwyn-Cicero area.

We believe that any future investments in the Berwyn-Cicero community should attempt to attain an overall goal that we express as follows:

Overall Goal

Attain healthy Latino families and a healthy Berwyn-Cicero community in which all residents have the resources necessary to progress socially and economically. This goal should be accomplished by implementing three key objectives:

Three Key Objectives

1. Facilitate the development of leadership, community organizing, public education, and advocacy in the Berwyn and Cicero community. The need for this kind of capacity-building training was frequently raised by the individuals who were interviewed for this report. Members of the Latino community must become more involved in civic life in Berwyn and Cicero. To accomplish this, there is clearly a need to train members of the community to assume leadership roles and to understand the dynamics of public and political life.
2. Improve the educational status of children and adults in the community.Education was ranked a a priority by more than 80% of the respondents interviewed for this report. Participants offered a wide range of education-related recommendations, including: improving the performance of children in local schools; expanding after-school tutoring and mentoring programs to improve academic performance and provide an alternative to gang involvement; expanding the pool of bilingual and Latino teachers; promoting parental involvement in the local school system; and providing opportunities for adult education.

3. Ensure that core social services, such as health, health education, counseling, domestic violence prevention, adult education, and immigration-related services are available in the community. The important issue is that these services are offered, not that a particular agency provides them. Some of these services could be provided by a branch of a group that already exists elsewhere, such as in Chicago, by a local group with expanded capacity, or by an entirely new entity.

We believe this report speaks frankly about the serious challenges facing the Berwyn-Cicero community in areas such as group relations, the responsiveness of governmental institutions, and public education. Notwithstanding these challenges, it is important to note the significant assets and strengths of the Berwyn-Cicero area. These include the fact that Berwyn and Cicero continue to enjoy the strategic position within the Chicago area that helped them to prosper in the first place. This includes access to major transportation arteries, a significant employment base, healthy business districts, and a geographic location that places the area at the heart of the great Chicago metropolis.

Another asset is the ongoing arrival into Berwyn and Cicero of first- and second-generation Americans with a strong work ethic, a strong faith and participation in church-related activities, commitment to families, and the desire to improve their social and economic standing. Finally, unlike the great majority of Chicago-area communities that are experiencing economic, social, and demographic change, Berwyn and Cicero are fortunate to have a local foundation with financial and other capital to bring to bear upon the area's problems. Harnessing these various assets effectively offers a realistic assurance of future prosperity for the residents of Berwyn and Cicero.

Methodology

Background

This report is a component of the Berwyn-Cicero Latino Community Initiative, a multiyear project whose ultimate goal is to enhance the quality of life in the Berwyn-Cicero area, with a particular emphasis on its Latino population. To do this, the Initiative will conduct research and facilitate opportunities for community capacity-building.

Through this process of community capacity-building informed by research, the Initiative will contribute to the quality of community life in Berwyn-Cicero by:

- promoting overall health and well-being;
- developing pathways to greater educational opportunities;
- enhancing the livability and quality of life;
- promoting economic development and redevelopment.

The first product of the initiative is the present community needs assessment study of Berwyn and Cicero. The study seeks to assess the assets, challenges, and needs of Latinos in Berwyn and Cicero in the context of the community in which they live.

The MacNeal Health Foundation commissioned the Berwyn-Cicero Needs Assessment study. As a relatively new foundation, created in October 1999, the MacNeal Health Foundation can use the study to provide a baseline of information to guide its grant giving and inform the strategic planning process. The foundation was created as a result of the sale of MacNeal Hospital. Given MacNeal Hospital's longstanding relationship in serving the communities of Berwyn and Cicero and the unprecedented demographic shifts of these areas, it was natural to select these communities for further study.

The study seeks to shed new light on recent demographic shifts that have transformed Berwyn and Cicero. The Latino community in Cicero grew by 166% in the decade of the 1990s and by 472% in the town of Berwyn. In addition, the 2000 Census reported that Cicero's population is now over 75% Latino and Berwyn is now 38% Latino.

This study was carried out in the summer of 2001.

Research Design

This report gives the results of a one-time case study of individuals who represent various sectors of Berwyn and Cicero. The study was multi-method, employing historical and contextual data, existing data, and fieldwork collected through interviews and focus groups.

Historical and Contextual Data

This section provides a brief historical overview of Berwyn and Cicero. It highlights settlement patterns and a select number of social and economic characteristics of the communities. It also provides contextual information on the Latino community, addressing issues of family, religious faith, immigration, and selected public policies that impact this sector of the population.

Existing Data

The study obtained and analyzed existing data to provide additional information and background on the target communities. These data sets include a 3,000+ annual survey of households in the Chicago metropolitan area conducted by the Metropolitan Chicago Information Center, school report card data from the Illinois State Board of Education, census data, and others.

Field Work

The core of the study included fieldwork conducted by administering interview and focus group instruments designed for this study. The first part of the instruments asked open-ended questions to ascertain the greatest changes in the community as well as how Latinos have been received in the community and the impact that they have made. The second part of the instrument asked questions on the needs/issues of Latinos in thirteen key areas: Education, Health Care, Social and Human Services, Housing, Employment and Occupation, Transportation, Children and Youth, Immigration, Crime and Violence, Law Enforcement, Local Business, Political Representation/Participation, and Community Representation/Participation. Participants were asked to assess the impor-

tance of these areas. In the third part of the instrument, participants were asked to identify their three priority issues areas and to propose solutions to these areas. In part four of the instrument, interviewees were asked to assess the responsiveness of key institutions in the community. Finally, the instrument collected summary demographic information on the study participants.

Sample Design

The study was designed to obtain the perspective of key stakeholders and/or representatives of key institutions who interact with community members on a consistent basis. Some of these individuals were institutional representatives and others, such as the community members, were individual representatives.

Prior to beginning the study, representatives from the Institute for Latino Studies, DePaul University, and the Interfaith Leadership Project (ILP) met and discussed which members of the community and which community institutions should be targeted to provide insightful comments and information about the Berwyn-Cicero area. Representatives from the ILP were particularly helpful in suggesting names, as they are based in the community. The group also developed a list of topic areas to be explored in conversations and interviews with community members.

A database of potential interviewees was then created by conducting several informal interviews with knowledgeable members of the community. These persons were asked to further identify individuals and institutions that provide key services in the community or are members of one of the identified target sectors. In addition, key community directories and the phone book were utilized to identify other institutions. Another database was developed to track interviews and facilitate mailings, phone calls, and follow-up with the targeted respondents.

The research team sought to ensure that all major institutions and actors were represented in either a one-on-one interview or a focus group. Assignment to an interview or focus group was based on participant availability and need for confidentiality. The community sectors targeted for inclusion in interviews and focus groups were as follows:

- Bankers
- Business Leaders
- Real Estate Agents
- Civic Leaders
- Community Leaders
- Community Organizations
- Community Youth Educators
- Health Providers
- Journalists
- Labor
- Law Enforcement
- Legal
- Political
- Social Service Providers
- Religious Leaders
- Long-Term Community Members
- Community Members–Berwyn
- Community Members–Cicero
- Chicago-Based Community Organizations that serve residents of Berwyn and Cicero

Sample Size

The study received the informed opinion of more than 60 individuals through one-on-one interviews. The study also conducted more than a dozen focus groups. In all, 172 persons communicated with us via interview or focus group.

Representative Quality of Sample

The sample of 172 persons was not designed to be a random sample of the community. The respondents should be construed to represent a broad cross-section of community opinion, having been selected to ensure coverage of major community sectors.

Interview/Focus Group Protocol

All potential study participants received a letter requesting their participation and a project description. They were then sent a follow-up letter or given a phone call inviting them to schedule an interview or attend a focus group on a specific date. All participants received a letter thanking them for their participation.

All participants were assured of confidentiality. Interviews and focus groups were identified by number only. All participants signed their consent to the interview/focus group and chose whether or not they wanted their name to be listed in the acknowledgement section of the report.

All participants chose whether they preferred to be interviewed in English or Spanish. The integrity of the Spanish-language translation was carefully monitored. In addition, research staff were available to conduct interviews or focus groups in Spanish.

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Research Team and Training

The Initiative is a project of the University of Notre Dame (Institute for Latino Studies) in partnership with DePaul University (Egan Urban Center and Center for Latino Research) and the Interfaith Leadership Project. The Project Team included the following members from each institution as well as a number of graduate and PhD students.

Individual	Organization	Role
Christopher Ahn	Institute for Latino Studies University of Notre Dame, Director of Technology and Design	Technical assistance and support
Adrián Aragonés	De Paul University, Grad. student, Univ. of Texas El Paso	Conduct interviews and focus groups
Jeff Bartow	Interfaith Leadership Project, Codirector	Community liaison, conduct interviews and focus groups
Allert Brown-Gort	Institute for Latino Studies University of Notre Dame, Associate Director	Assist with project oversight, conduct interviews and focus groups
Miryam Bujanda	Institute for Latino Studies University of Notre Dame, Projects Director	Assist with project oversight, conduct interviews and focus groups
Gilberto Cárdenas, PhD	Institute for Latino Studies University of Notre Dame, Director	Provide project oversight
Priscilla Clements	Institute for Latino Studies University of Notre Dame, Recent graduate	Manage database and assist with scheduling
Edie Díaz	DePaul University, Recent Graduate, MA	Assist with scheduling, manage qualitative and quantitative data entry
John Koval, PhD	DePaul University, Associate Professor	Qualitative research director, principal designer of interview and focus group instruments
Philip García, PhD	Institute for Latino Studies University of Notre Dame, Associate Director of IUPLR	Research director
Guadalupe Martínez	Univ. of Illinois, PhD student	Conduct interviews and focus groups
Felix Masud-Piloto	De Paul University, Director, Center for Latino Research, Associate Professor	Conduct interviews and focus groups
Alejandro Padilla	Univ. of Illinois, PhD student	Conduct interviews and focus groups, identify and collect school-related data
Rob Paral	Research Consultant	Principal writer of the report, conduct interviews
Aníbal Pérez-Liñán	Univ. of Notre Dame, PhD	Conduct interviews and focus groups, identify and analyze MCIC data
Dolores Ponce de León	Interfaith Leadership Project, Codirector	Community liaison, conduct interviews and focus groups
Sylvia Puente	Institute for Latino Studies, University of Notre Dame, Director, Berwyn-Cicero Project	Project director
Angela Sedeño	Loyola University, PhD student	Conduct interviews and focus groups, conduct quality check
Gavin Sosa	De Paul University, Recent graduate	Conduct interviews and focus groups, conduct SPSS data entry
Office Assistants		Transcribe interview tapes

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The research team for the needs assessment study was trained in the following manner:

Two in-depth trainings were held to review and test the interview and focus group instruments. The instruments were modified for content or length, based on practice interviews and focus groups.

All team participants received a thorough project overview and an overview of the community. Select team members were oriented with a tour of the community.

All team members received training on how to conduct the interviews and focus groups. This included a verbal presentation, written materials, and one-on-one follow up with the Project Director to ensure understanding and accountability. Examples of written materials included "Handy Hints on Starting the Conversation," a memo on data analysis, and written instructions on how to use all interview and focus group equipment. Extensive training was provided on how to code completed interviews and focus groups.

Ongoing support, technical assistance, and project updates for project staff were obtained through weekly team meetings. All meetings had an agenda and relevant written procedures.

Data Processing and Analysis

ILS purchased standard equipment that was used for all interviews and focus groups. This included tape recorders, focus group equipment, tapes, transcription machines, and a dubbing machine. All interview tapes were dubbed. One copy of each dubbed tape was archived and the other is available for research purposes.

Once an interview/focus group was complete, a full or abbreviated transcript was developed. Abbreviated transcripts focused on identifying relevant research themes. This transcript was coded for data entry into the qualitati ta program. Coding requirements and guidelines were developed to ensure uniformity of project themes and findings.

A sample number of interview/focus groups were reviewed to conduct a quality check. This quality check was important for abbreviated transcripts. It ensured that no relevant themes were omitted from data analysis.

The demographic information on each study participant was coded into SPSS, a quantitative analysis tool. This facilitated the provision of summary and categorical statistics on project participants.

The transcript of each interview/focus group was coded and entered into the NUD*IST qualitative data program. This program enabled easy retrieval of coded portions of each interview and/or focus group. For example, we were able to search the data set by a key word or phrase, such as education, or adult education. In addition, we were able to sort responses by any of the demographic codes, e.g., the number of educators who thought that education was the highest priority issue, versus the number of noneducators who did.

Endnotes

[1] Louise Año Nuevo Kerr, "Mexican Chicago: Chicano Assimilation Aborted, 1939–1954," in *Ethnic Chicago*, eds. Melvin Holli and Peter Jones (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1984).

[2] Information on these lawsuits is available from Latinos United, a housing advocacy group in Chicago.

[3] Michael Higgins, "Fired officer claims police used racial slurs, profiling," *Chicago Tribune*, 16 March 2000.

[4] Rafael Heller, *What Affirmative Action? Where Are the Minority Educators in the Metropolitan Chicago Schools?* (Chicago: Chicago Urban League and the Latino Institute, 1992).

[5] Enrique Florescano et al., *Atlas histórico de México* (Mexico City: Siglo XXI Editores, 1984).

[6] Felix Padilla, *Latino Ethnic Consciousness* (Notre Dame, Indiana: Notre Dame Press).

[7] Kerr 1984.

[8] D. Garth Taylor, *2000 Metro Survey Report* (Chicago: Metro Chicago Information Center, 2000).

[9] Jeff Passel and Michael Fix, "US Immigration at the Beginning of the 21st Century," Testimony Prepared for the Subcommittee on Immigration and Claims, Hearing on "The US Population and Immigration," Committee of the Judiciary, US House of Representatives, 2 August 2001.

[10] Steve Schwartz, teacher of American and European History at Morton East High School, has been instrumental in organizing Latino students to write about these experiences.

[11] Under immigration law, a sponsored immigrant can sue his or her family sponsors for failing to take care of him or her.

[12] Personal conversation between Rob Paral and plant manager for RTC Industries.

[13] National Council of La Raza 11 July 2001 press release, "AARP Study Confirms Hispanics' Commitment to Families and Children" (Washington, DC: National Council of La Raza).

[14] Betty Carlson Kay, *Cicero: The First Suburb* (West Chicago: Arcadia Publishing, 2000).

[15] US Census Bureau, *Census of Manufacturing*. (Washington, DC: US Census Bureau, various dates 1939–1992).

[16] *Chicago Tribune*, 17 June 2001, "Cicero's History of Corruption."

[17] Illinois Police and Sheriff's News website, at www.ipsn.org/maltese.html.

ENDNOTES

[18] US Department of Justice, United States Attorney, Northern District of Illinois press release 15 June 2001, "Three Cicero Officials among 10 Indicted in Racketeering and Fraud Scheme to Loot Town of Millions."

[19] Berwyn Historical Society, *Stories of an Earlier Berwyn* (Berwyn, Illinois: Berwyn Historical Society, 1983).

[20] These issues were determined by the research team as areas frequently studied in community needs assessments.

[21] We have combined children, youth, and education together in one subsection, law enforcement, crime and violence in another subsection, and political representation and community representation in another section.

[22] This section draws heavily from Rob Paral, *Suburban Immigrant Communities: Assessments of Key Characteristics and Needs* (Chicago: Fund for Immigrants and Refugees, 2000).

[23] Data derived from Current Population Survey conducted by US Commerce Department. Data represent average finding for 1997–2000 period.

[24] Noncitizens who use certain public assistance programs can be determined by the INS to be a 'public charge', or someone who depends too much on government help. An immigrant found to be a public charge may not be able to adjust his or her status and attain legal residence. The ability of family members to get permanent residence can also be affected. A public charge determination can also prevent an immigrant from sponsoring the immigration of a relative. Confusion about public charge has dampened immigrants' willingness to use Medicaid. In fact, immigrants eligible for Medicaid can use that program (except for long-term care) without being declared a public charge.

[25] The federal poverty level for a family of four is about $17,000. Someone with income at 133% of this level would have $22,610 ($17,000 X 1.33 = $22,610).

[26] The rationale for this exception for undocumented women is that their children will be US citizens by birth and that proactive medical care for pregnant women saves vastly more expensive neonatal care for infants born with avoidable illnesses or complications.

[27] Paral 2000.

[28] Carlson 2000.

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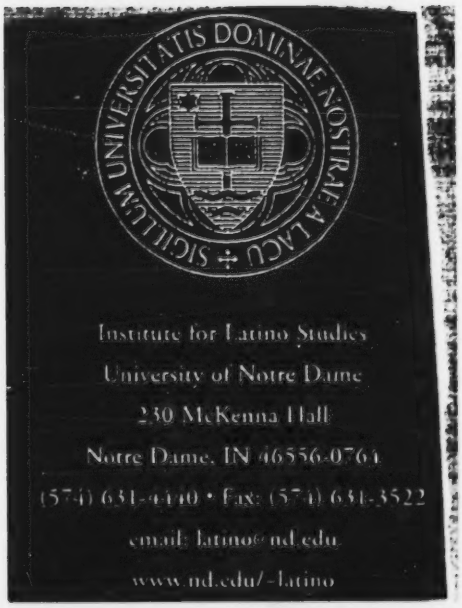

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